

Baker Street Elementary



Our Year in Print

Yearbook Staff: Joe Fay, Rusty & Steve Mason

2018 - The Fourth Year - The First Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson

Baker Street *Elementary*

Baker Street Elementary – 2018 -- The Fourth Year

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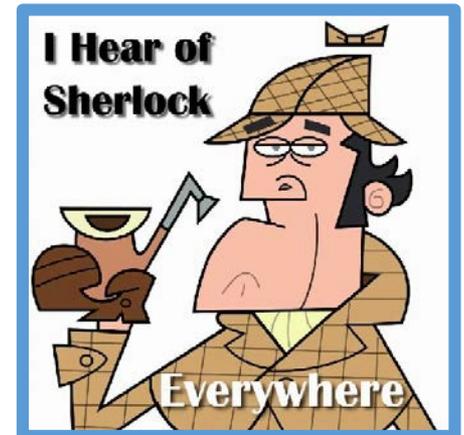
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Bound in the surelox style, apropos of the subject matter.

This year, we were honored to continue "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" (IHOSE) carrying our strip on a bi-weekly basis. Thanks, Scott and Burt, for believing in us. We have included excerpts from Scott's introductions for the episodes. They are very imaginative, and add a wonderful flair to the strips.

Visit IHOSE at <http://www.ihearofsherlock.com>



Baker Street *Elementary*

FOREWORD

"Art in the Blood...."

As a kid growing up, there was nothing more important to me than making sure I had the newest issue of comics such as Batman, Superman, and The Flash.

I have always been a collector; it was in my blood. My personal collection of comics was read once and then put neatly away. What always captivated me was the artwork.

Even in those early days, there was something about the way comic artists were able to convey super speed, flying and multiple other powers my superhero idols were able to demonstrate.

Later in life, as I got interested in Sherlock Holmes and began building my Holmes book collection, I became more and more fascinated with the art on the dust jackets from books starting in the early 1900's and beyond.

Once again, the art depicting the ghostly Hound jumping from the page or Holmes on the hunt were beautifully depicted.

This led to a want or perhaps a need to own the art for these and other images of Holmes from Bugs Bunny to Alfred E. Neuman, and thousands of other images, both realistic and funny of the Great Detective.

When walking into a bookstore or comic shop, it is always the art of a dust jacket or comic cover, which draws you to that particular item.

It is this first, and then you delve into the pages within. This is why a comic strip like "Elementary" is important. It can get a young person not only to take those early steps to Holmes, but more importantly to a lifetime of reading a book.

Jerry Margolin, BSI (Hilton Cubitt)
Portland, Oregon

POINTS TO PONDER THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

IF YOU DON'T WANT CLOTHES FROM CHRISTMAS, REMIND YOUR PARENTS YOU STILL BELIEVE IN SANTA CLAUS...



POINTS TO PONDER THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

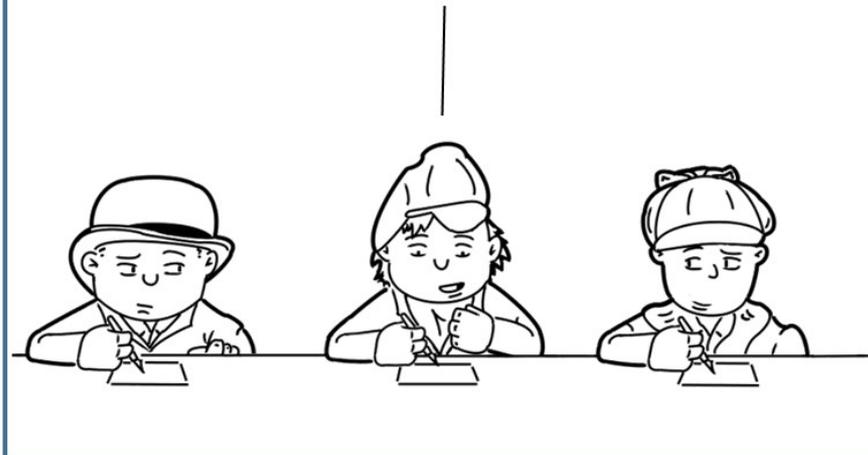
SO, IF SNOWMEN ARE MADE OF WATER, AND WATER HAS NO CALORIES, WHY DO WE BUILD FAT SNOWMEN?



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POINTS TO PONDER THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

AND, IF SNOWMEN HAVE CARROTS FOR NOSES, DOES CARROT CAKE TASTE LIKE BOOGERS?



The countdown to Christmas Day is on. And whether one is a Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jew, atheist or anything else, it's a day that is recognized across the globe.

As adults, we perhaps groan under the weight that the holiday season puts on our shoulders: from shopping to planning meals to hosting relatives, it can be a series of responsibilities that add stress to at time of year that also has emotional land mines planted among the holidays. But think back to Christmas (or any major holiday that was important to your family) when you were a child.

There was a sense of wonder, of delight, and of anticipation. For the good children that meant excited anticipation; or the naughty children, perhaps it was more nervous anticipation. Whichever side you fell on, you were certainly listless. And if you were naughty, perhaps you hoped that a certain all-seeing, all-documenting someone was "list-less" as well.

And so it is over at Baker Street Elementary, where anticipation looms...



SO IGNATIUS, HOW DID YOU PROCURE YOUR NAME?



I WAS GIVEN THE NAME "IGNATIUS" TO HONOR ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUITS... HE IS THE PATRON SAINTS OF SOLDIERS...

... AND BY THE WAY, WHEN I GET OLDER, I INTEND TO INCLUDE "CONAN" IN MY NAME, TO HONOR MY GODFATER, MICHAEL CONAN...



MY GIVEN NAME, "ARTHUR" WAS CHOSEN BY MY MOTHER, TO HONOR ARTHUR I, THE DUKE OF BRITTANY, WHO AT ONE TIME WAS IN LINE FOR THE THRONE... HE WAS KILLED BY KING JOHN AFTER STANDING AGAINST HIM... OF COURSE, IT IS ALSO LINKED TO KING ARTHUR... MY MOTHER IS FANATICAL ABOUT THE MEDIEVAL AGES...



... AND OF COURSE, "DOYLE" IS ORIGINALLY IRISH, FROM THE GAELIC "DUB-GHAIL", MEANING "DARK FOREIGNER"... THIS IS THE NAME THE CELTS GAVE TO THE VIKINGS WHEN THEY SETTLED IN IRELAND... IT ALSO REPRESENTS THE "D'OILLYS", WHO SETTLED IN ENGLAND AND IRELAND WITH WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

INTERESTING... MORE THAN I WAS EXPECTING... OK, WATSON, YOU'RE NEXT...



Thanks to Roger Johnson and Peter Blau for their assistance on this...

When we ring in the New Year, we typically do so with fanfare and a look toward the future, in an effort to put our best foot forward. And in doing so, we also take a look backward to assess our shortcomings and areas where we think we might improve. It is human nature to anticipate, as well as to critique.

We see a microcosm of this in the Sherlock Holmes stories: Sherlock Holmes was certainly one who offered his fair share of critiques — of Scotland Yard, of the establishment, of Watson, and even of himself ("kindly whisper 'Norbury' in my ear").

But we can also find instances of anticipation in the Canon — Holmes grinning with glee as he surprised Watson or the occasional police detective with his clever disguises, and even Holmes looking forward to a visit with his old friend Watson.

Naturally, at Baker Street Elementary we find an earlier incarnation of critiques and anticipation...

Baker Street Elementary
Number 143 - 12/31/2017

Fog, Morn, & More

Some Ponderings on New Years

MY MOTHER TOLD MY FATHER, 'THIS YEAR, INSTEAD OF MAKING MYSELF BETTER, IT MIGHT BE EASIER JUST TO GET A NEW ONE OF YOU.'



I AM CHANGING MY STRATEGY...
SIMPLY WING IT THIS YEAR
AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS...



REMEMBER, ON NEW YEARS EVE,
YOU STILL HAVE 24 HOURS TO DO
ALL THOSE THINGS YOU RESOLVE
NOT TO DO NEXT YEAR...



I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S BEEN A WHOLE YEAR
SINCE I DIDN'T BECOME A BETTER PERSON...

... AND MY WISH FOR NEXT YEAR
IS THAT MY TROUBLES LAST AS
LONG AS MY RESOLUTIONS



SO MASTER WATSON, WOULD YOU LIKE TO EXPLAIN THE ORIGIN OF YOUR NAME?



IT'S NOT AS COLORFUL AS IGANTIUS'... WATSON, A SCOTTISH NAME, STANDS LITERALLY FOR 'SON OF WALTER'...



MY GIVEN NAME, JOHN, IS IN HONOR OF A PAST RELATIVE...

... AND OF COURSE, MY MIDDLE NAME "HAMISH" IS SCOTTISH FOR "JAMES"



... MY MOTHER WANTED "JAMES," BUT I ALREADY HAVE AN OLDER BROTHER NAMED "JAMES," AND WHO IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD NAME MULTIPLE SIBLINGS "JAMES"?

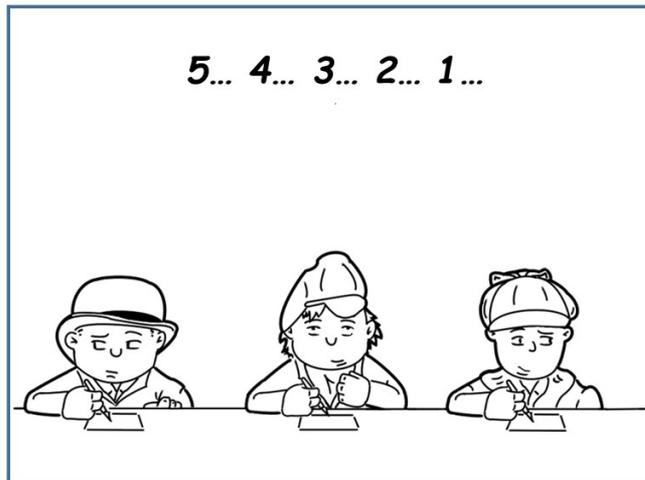
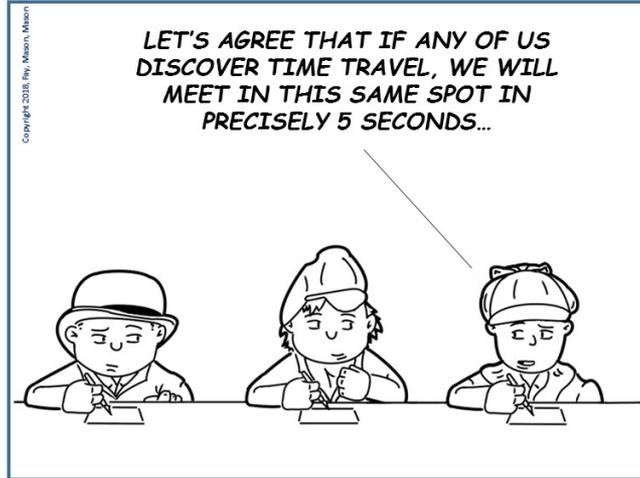
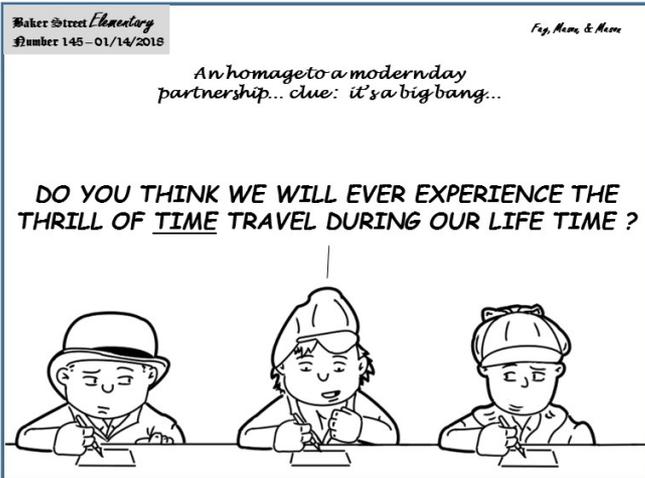


For the most part, the Sherlock Holmes stories are tightly woven into reality. That is, they take place in a world that exists (or existed) and deal with events based in fact.

Even cases like *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, "The Devil's Foot," and "The Sussex Vampire," which seemed to be based on some kind of supernatural or other-worldly influence, were easily explained away with scientific observations. Very little of the Canon veers into science fiction. One exception might be in "The Creeping Man," where an individual takes on the behaviors and traits of something that is not quite human. (We'll leave the spoilers out of this)

One member of the Baker Street Irregulars was Isaac Asimov, BSI ("The Remarkable Worm Unknown to Science"), who was a prolific writer of science fiction novels. Of course, he also did some Sherlockian writing as well. The area where the two intersected was in *Sherlock Holmes Through Time and Space*, an anthology of science fiction Sherlock Holmes stories which he edited.

The boys at Baker Street Elementary seem to think they have a handle on what it takes to go from fact to fiction...



SO, YOUR TURN STAMFORD... IS
STAMFORD YOUR GIVEN OR SURNAME ?



< um... >
ACTUALLY, IT IS BOTH MY FIRST
AND LAST NAME... MY FATHER
HAS A WEIRD SENSE OF HUMOR.



HE CONVINCED MY MUM I WOULD
LEARN TO WRITE MY NAME FASTER
THAN MOST CHILDREN, SINCE I
ONLY HAD TO LEARN ONE NAME...



... AND IT WOULD BE CHEAPER TO PURCHASE
MONOGRAM SHIRTS AND OTHER ITEMS,
SINCE I WOULD ONLY NEED THE LETTER
'S'
I BELIEVE THIS EXPLAINS A LOT...



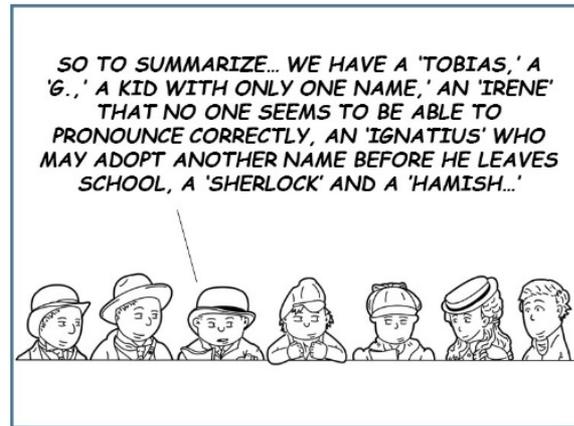
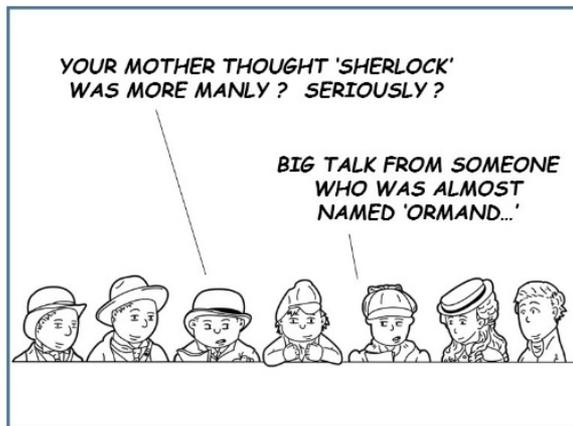
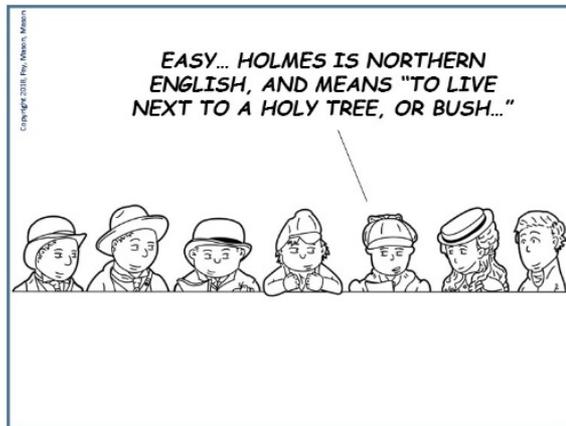
We know the main players in the Sherlock Holmes stories by the names that are familiar to many people throughout the world. But there has been some confusion along the way.

Sherlock Holmes was originally intended to be called "Sherrinford" and John Watson was originally cast as "Ormond Sacker."

But of course Mrs. Watson had other ideas about what he should be called. Conan Doyle went to great lengths in his selection of names (not quite so far as Charles Dickens), and Don Redmond, BSI ("Good Old Index") even penned *A Study in Sources* to trace a few origins.

Whether we know them by first or last name, by an American or British pronunciation (or spelling), or by their intended versus given names, they are, to us, all the same. No doubt the halls of Baker Street Elementary will be one day buzzing with the study of Romeo and Juliet, in which Juliet wonders:

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet."



SO, IT SEEMS YOU HAVE BEEN TORMENTING YOUR TEACHERS... FOR SOME STRANGE REASON, THEY HAVE DECIDED TO HAVE ME TALK TO THE GROUP OF YOU... SIMPLY PUT, YOU ARE DRIVING THEM INSANE...



THE FACULTY STAFF SENT YOU TO STOP US? ALL WE ARE DOING IS QUESTIONING THE SUBJECTS THE TEACHERS ARE IMPOSING ON US.

BUT WHY?



BECAUSE IT IS OUR JOB AS CURIOUS CHILDREN TO QUESTION WHAT ADULTS MAKE US DO AND LEARN.

BUT WHY?

BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THAT ADULTS MIGHT NOT KNOW WHAT IS BEST TO TEACH US.

WHY?



WHY? WHY? POSSIBLY WE KNOW WHAT IS BEST FOR US TO LEARN MORE THAN THE TEACHERS DO...

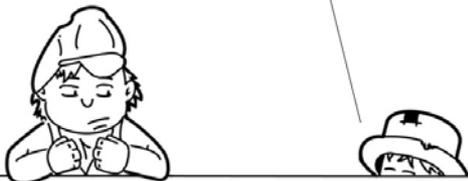
WHY?



WE SEE... SO THE TEACHERS HAVE CHOSEN TO FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE... WELL PLAYED.



WE NOW SEE WHICH SIDE OF THE AISLE YOU HAVE CHOSEN. YOU, MASTER STAMFORD, WILL RUE THE DAY YOU CROSSED US YOUNGINS'. RUE THE DAY!



HUH? I GUESS I DID WHAT I WAS TO DO... I THINK...



I WONDER IF I CAN GET AN EXTRA SLICE OF THE MYSTERY MEAT TOMORROW FOR LUNCH, AS A REWARD.



SO THE FIRST ANSWER IS ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE...



THAT MEANS THE SECOND ANSWER IS FALSE, TO BALANCE OUT THE FIRST QUESTION... THE THIRD WILL BE FALSE TO BREAK THE PATTERN AND CONFUSE THE STUDENTS...



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The Sherlock Holmes stories have their fill of codes and cyphers. "The Adventure of the Dancing Men" is probably the most easily recognized and well-known.

But the clever spacing of words within a bit of nonsense writing in "The Gloria Scott" was an early code that Holmes cracked, while recuperating at the country home of his university friend Victor Trevor.

In "The Reigate Squire," we find another type of word spacing — one requiring two writers, the first of whom would leave blanks and the second who would fill those blanks with words.

Ultimately, it was the handwriting and spacing that gave them away.

Young Wiggins is trying his hand at cracking a code at Baker Street Elementary.

Will he achieve Sherlock Holmes-level status, or will he come up blank? The answer awaits...

THEN A TRUE, TWO FALSE'S, THREE TRUE'S IN A ROW... SHE LIKES TO TOSS IN THREE TRUE'S IN A ROW... FOUR IN A ROW WOULD JUST BE RIDICULOUS, SO THE NEXT ANSWER MUST BE TRUE... AND THE LAST QUESTION IS ALWAYS FALSE.



IF YOU FIGURE OUT A TEACHER'S PATTERN, TRUE/FALSE TESTS CAN BE A BREEZE... SOMETHING WRONG, JOHN?

I REALLY HATE TO BREAK THIS TO YOU... IT'S A "FILL IN THE BLANK" TEST...



<< eek >> THAT'S NOT FUNNY JOHN !

NOT MEANT TO BE...



MAYBE YOU CAN FAKE GETTING VIOLENTLY ILL, RUN OUT OF THE CLASSROOM, AND JUST GO HOME...

TRUST ME, IT WOULD NOT BE FAKING...



HOW WAS THE VISIT HOME THIS WEEKEND ?

FINE, UNTIL THIS MORNING WHEN
I TOLD MY MOTHER I WAS TOO
SICK TO ATTEND SCHOOL TODAY...



... AND DOCTOR, WHAT WAS YOUR
SELF-INFLICTED DIAGNOSIS ?

I TOLD HER I HAD
"ANAL GLAUCOMA..."



I COULD NOT SEE MY ARSE
COMING TO SCHOOL... HA HA HA...

DID SHE LAUGH ALSO ?



MY REAR END IS REDDER THAN LAST EVENING...
AND YOU WILL NEVER HEAR ME USE THE TERMS
'SOAP' AND 'TASTY' IN THE SAME SENTENCE.



When one produces some public work of note, there's virtually never an instance of said work being universally acclaimed. It's met praise and scorn, depending on the view of the critic.

From weekend sport (from which the popular phrase "Monday morning quarterback" gained popularity) to even some of the greatest works we know — such as the London premiere of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony — creative works are subject to negative reviews and skeptical audiences.

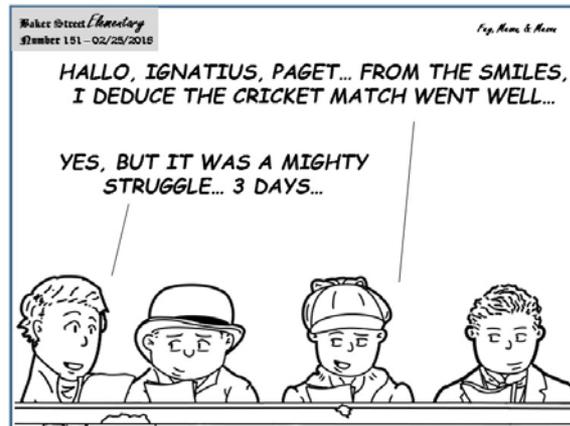
So it comes as no surprise that we occasionally glimpse Holmes's prickly attitude regarding the cases that Watson has chosen to bring to life. As early at *The Sign of Four*, we're granted a view of Holmes taking issue with the single previous story that Watson has written up:

"You have attempted to tinge it with romanticism, which produces much the same effect as if you worked a love-story or an elopement into the fifth proposition of Euclid."

— *A Study in Scarlet*

Given that Holmes had the demeanor of an artist (recall that he said he was descended from the French artist Vernet, and that "Art in the blood is liable to take the strangest forms." [GREE]), it's not terribly surprising that his reaction to Watson's artistry would be emotional — ironic, given that the topic over which he got so emotional was the discourse of the adventures arising from his logical faculties.

Could it be that this bickering of "professional beauties" [STUD] was rooted in something earlier in their relationship? Something that happened, perhaps, at Baker Street Elementary...



SHERLOCK, I AM STILL CONFUSED...
HOW DID YOU SOLVE THE CHALK
ERASER DISAPPEARANCE MYSTERY ?



EASY... I HAPPENED TO NOTICE THE
THIEF HAD ACCIDENTALLY PRESSED
HIS RIGHT THUMB INTO THE CHALK
DUST, INADVERTANTLY CREATING A
THUMB MARK IN THE DUST.



I THEN ASKED EACH STUDENT TO PRESS
THEIR RIGHT THUMB INTO A COATING OF
CHALK DUST I HAD SPREAD OVER A LAB
TABLE... THIS SYSTEM OF COMPARISON IS
NOW BEING USED IN INDIA.



OF COURSE, WE HAD TO CONDUCT THE TEST
TWICE... JUST AS WE FINISHED, STAMFORD
VIOLENTLY SNEEZED, WIPING THE TABLE CLEAN
AND CREATING A LONDON FOG INDOORS...

HE CLAIMED TO BE
ALLERGIC TO CHALK DUST.



EACH PERSON'S MARK APPEARS TO BE UNIQUE,
SO IT WAS EASY TO MATCH UP THE PRINTS.
ONCE I IDENTIFIED THE THIEF, HE STATED THE
ENTIRE ESCAPE WAS A PRANK AGAINST THE
TEACHER, SO HE ESCAPED ANY SERIOUS
REPERCUSSIONS.



UNIQUE FINGER MARKS... NEXT YOU WILL
BE CONVINCING US OTHER BODY PARTS,
SUCH AS OUR EARS, ARE ALSO UNIQUE.

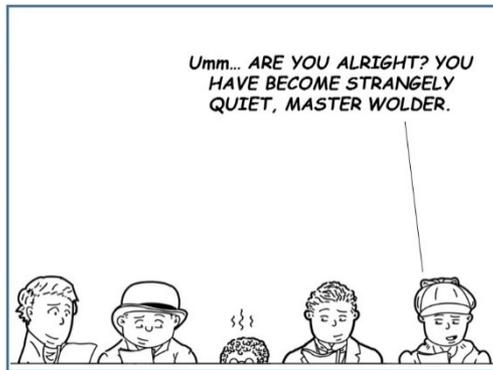
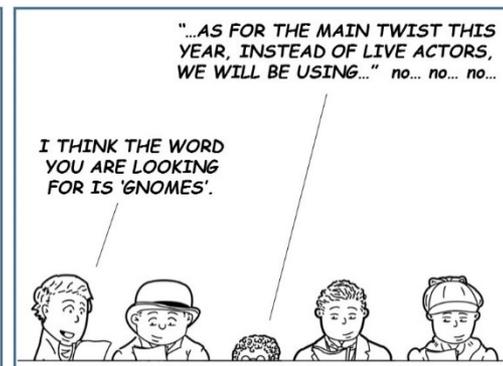
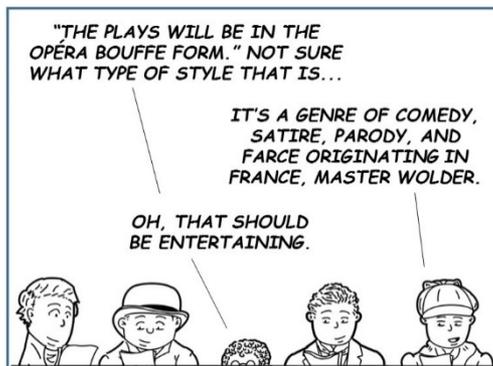
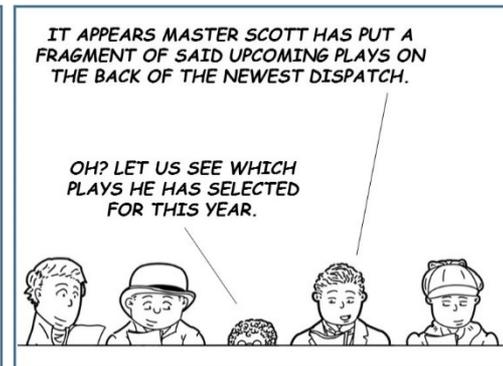
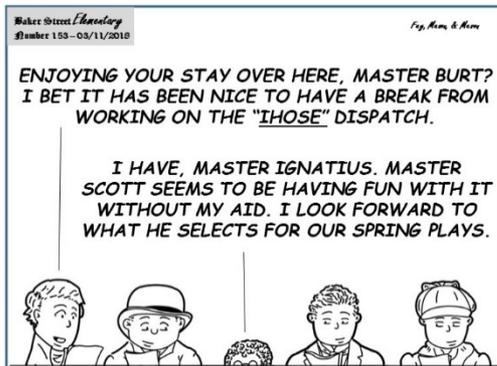
hmmm... THERE
MIGHT BE ANOTHER
MONOGRAPH.



One of the joys of preparing the biweekly dispatch from Baker Street Elementary is opening the Dropbox file that contains the artwork we'll be sharing. It's always a surprise, and it puts our Canonical insights and general knowledge into overdrive. But it isn't often that we're stumped.

We're honored that IHOSE itself is a feature in the latest round, and that "Master Burt" clearly expresses his reaction to the forthcoming Sherlock Gnomes, slated to be released on March 23 in the United States. [Reminder: we wrote about it here: "Sherlock Gnomes: A First Look"] And let's just say that this type of entertainment is not everyone's cup of tea.

See if you find as much mirth at Baker Street Elementary this week as we did...



MASTER BURT, I BELIEVE YOU SHOULD EMBRACE WHAT MASTER SCOTT HAS ACCOMPLISHED. THINK OF THE MULTITUDE OF OPTIONS OPEN TO YOU. IMAGINE FOR EXAMPLE: "THE GNOMES OF VENICE."

NO...



I WOULD FAVOR "COMEDY OF GNOMES..." OR...

NO...

"THE MERRY GNOMES OF WINDSOR"

NO...



"THE TAMING OF THE GNOME" WOULD TAKE VERY IMAGINATIVE EDITING...

NO...

HOWEVER, "THE TWO GNOMES OF VENICE" COULD BE A WONDERFUL START FOR YOUNG ACTORS.

NO...



"MUCH ADO ABOUT GNOMES" WOULD BE INSPIRED...

uh... NO...

... AND HOW COULD YOU NOT LOVE "MIDSUMMER GNOME'S DREAM"?

hmm... NO...



I SURRENDER...

I GUESS "GNOMEO AND JULIET" WOULD HAVE SOME INTERESTING POSSIBILITIES...



SORRY TO TELL YOU OL' CHAP, BUT IT HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE...



THANK GOODNESS MASTER BURT HAS A WONDERFUL SENSE OF HUMOR... WE HOPE

In "The Boscombe Valley Mystery," Dr. Watson told Sherlock Holmes: "I am afraid that the facts are so obvious that you will find little credit to be gained out of this case." And Holmes replied, "There is nothing more deceptive as an obvious fact."

In some ways, that feels like what we have in this week's strip from Baker Street Elementary. I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere has been given two panels with which to work.

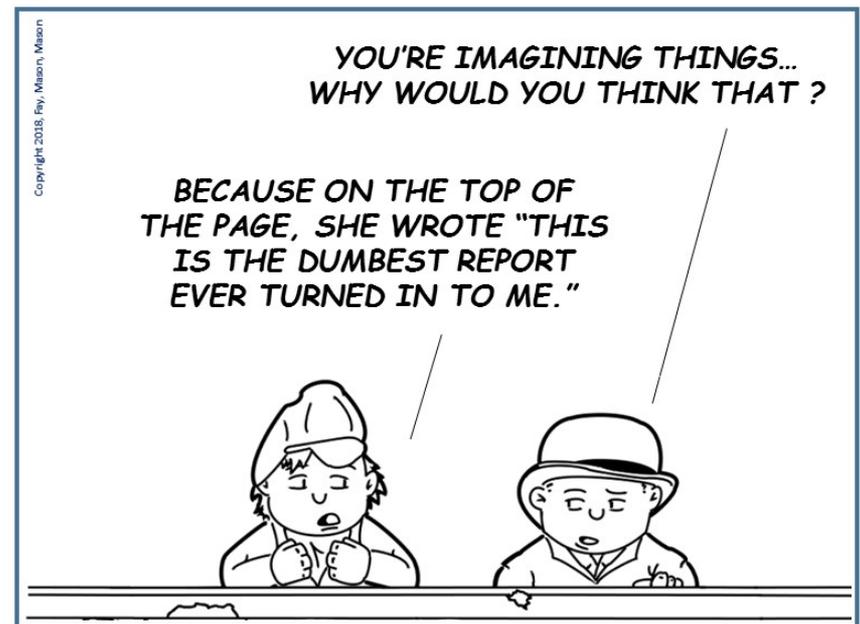
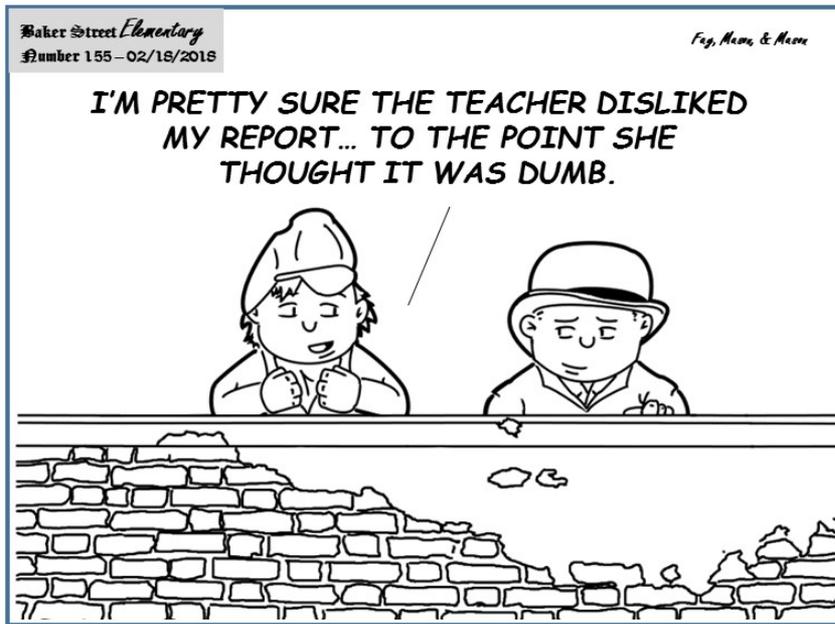
Let's focus that phrase that Sherlock Holmes uttered — a phrase that is even repeated outside of Sherlockian circles: "nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact." Is that really true?

We take it at face value, of course, that because something looks true, it must be so. But simply because something is easy to perceive or comprehend does not necessarily make it false. But our way of comprehending things sometimes tricks the mind into believing something is so, due to our preconceived notions or expectations.

In short, Holmes was cautioning Watson (and us) against jumping to a conclusion that would support a false bias.

But it does not necessarily follow that obvious facts are always deceptive. It's a bit of a leap of logic to reach that conclusion.

However, things at Baker Street Elementary may need to be on the obvious side...



I DON'T THINK OUR TEACHERS ARE PAID WELL ENOUGH...



AFTER ALL, SOCIETY'S INVESTMENT IN OUR FUTURE IS PREDICATED ON THE QUALITY OF THE EDUCATORS IN THESE HALLOWED HALLS...



TEACHERS SHOULD TAKE TO THE STREETS TO DEMAND MORE COMPENSATION, STARTING THIS MORNING.

DIDN'T FINISH YOUR HOMEWORK AGAIN ?



Some students have a natural turn for certain subjects; history may be filled with exciting events and people for one student, but may seem a boring litany of dates and unimportant facts for others.

Mathematics elicits such dichotomous reactions from students as well. We can see some beating their heads on their desks in frustration, while others seem to have a knack for it.

Sherlock Holmes certainly seemed to be inclined toward mathematics, as he declared "The calculation is a simple one," and determined the speed of the train based on the distance of the quarter-posts in "Silver Blaze."

Another indication of Sherlock Holmes's proficiency with mathematics is his ability with the violin. People who are adept at math often have a turn for music as well. The topic has been explored and recognized, even as early as Pythagoras, who wrote:

"There is geometry in the humming of the strings, there is music in the spacing of the spheres."

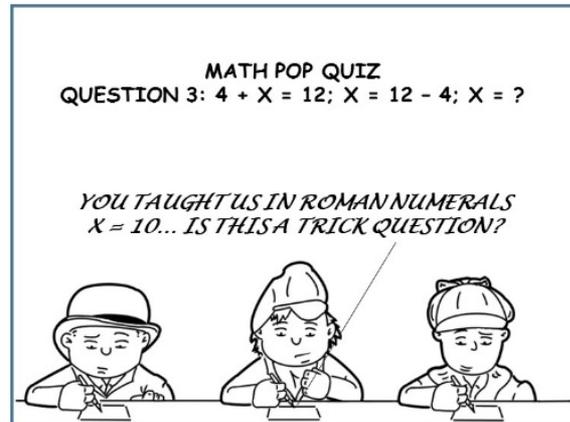
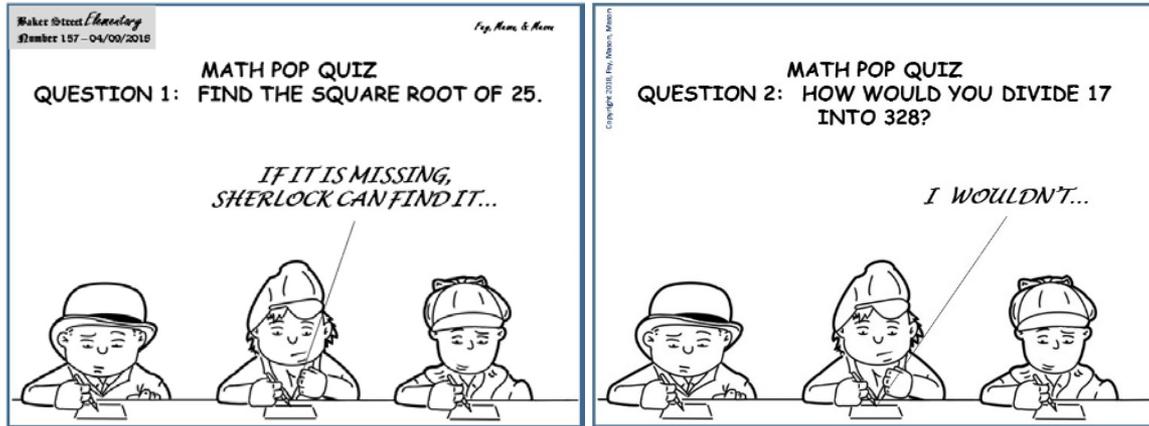
Last year, Scientific American documented:

"Learning to play a musical instrument relies on understanding concepts, such as fractions and ratios, that are important for mathematical achievement."

However, the article noted that it is still unclear whether musical training encourages mathematical ability, or whether math proficiency makes musical training more natural. It's a chicken-and-egg phenomenon.

One certain thing worth noting is that there was a professor in the Sherlock Holmes stories who was "endowed by nature with a phenomenal mathematical faculty." That was of course Professor Moriarty. Over the years, as Sherlockian scholarship and pastiches have bloomed, at least one source has postulated that Moriarty could have been Sherlock Holmes's math tutor during his formative years.

Did that tutelage take place in Baker Street Elementary? If so, Wiggins was certainly not part of that study group...



I HOPE EVERYONE HAS
APPROPRIATELY CHOSEN
THEIR COSTUME FOR QUEEN-
VIC-con THIS WEEKEND...



I HAVE CHOSEN PRINCE ALBERT, A
GREAT SUPPORTER OF PUBLIC CAUSES...



IT MAY SOUND STRANGE, BUT I AM
GOING AS EDWARD OXFORD, VICTORIA'S
FIRST "WOULD-BE ASSASSIN..."



I HAVE CHOSEN HER MAJESTY'S FIRST
SON, EDWARD, WHO I BELIEVE WILL
SOMEDAY RULE OVER OUR LANDS...



BOO!



STAMFORD, LET ME
GUESS... THE GHOST OF
PRINCE EDWARD,
VICTORIA'S FATHER...

THINK I SHOULD
BRING A TRICK
OR TREAT BAG
JUST IN CASE?



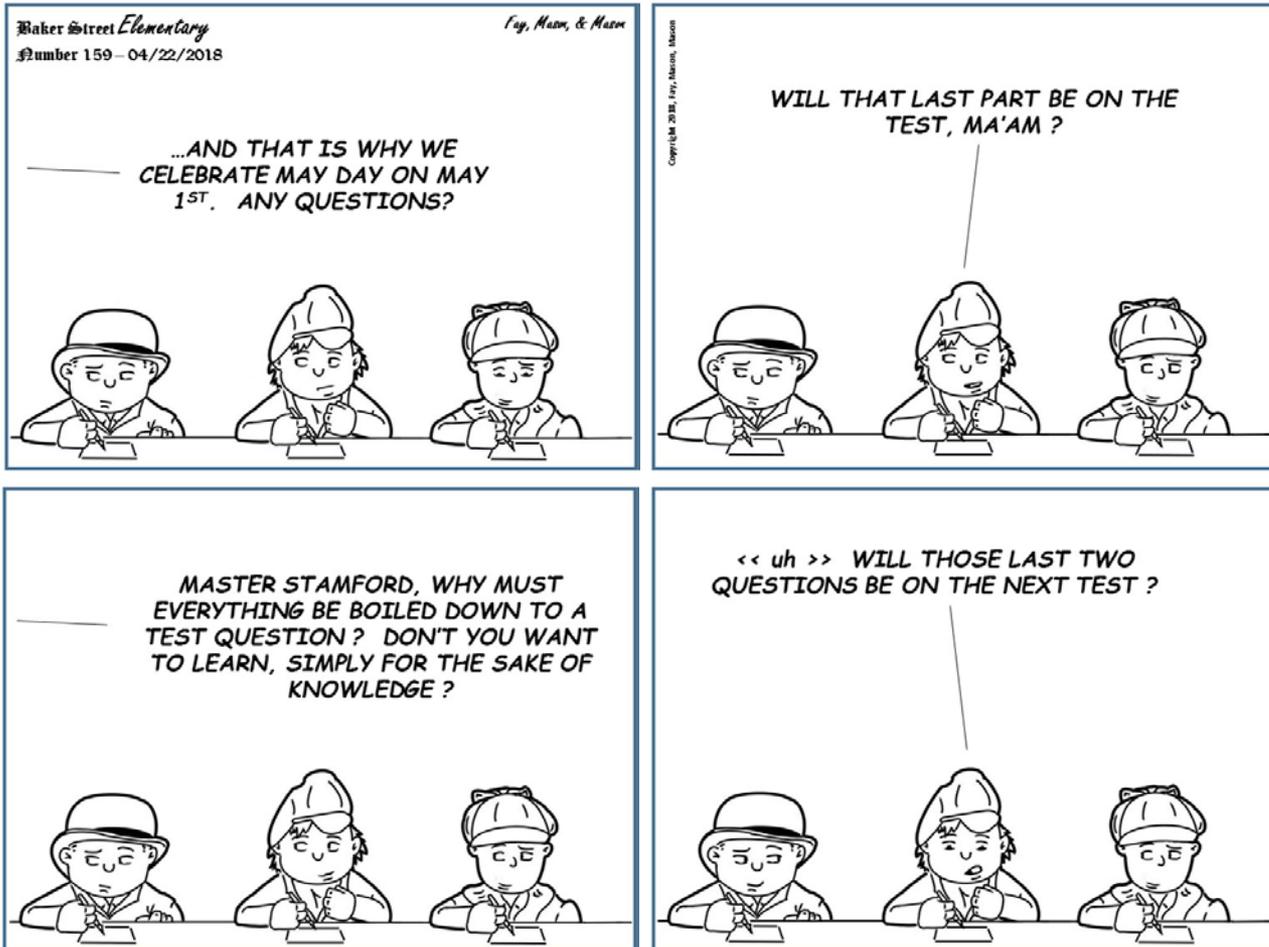
When it comes to teaching and learning, one of the first methods adopted by the western world, thanks largely to Aristotle, was **rhetoric**. Simply put, it is the art of discourse in which an individual seeks to inform, motivate or persuade an audience.

Rhetoric is the realm of the expert, the lawyer, or the public speaker. It is designed more toward lecturing rather than interaction. Which is why a *rhetorical question* typically requires no answer. Early practitioners of rhetoric included Cicero, who as a Roman lawyer, senator and consul was one of the all-time great public speakers. His mantra was "If you wish to persuade me, you must think my thoughts, feel my feelings and speak my words." He was a masterful rhetorician.

Often times, we've witnessed Sherlock Holmes carrying on in this manner. Indeed, in "The Adventure of the Dancing Men," Watson relates this scene:

"You see, my dear Watson"—he propped his test tube in the rack and began to lecture with the air of a professor addressing his class—"it is not really difficult to construct a series of inferences, each dependent upon its predecessor and each simple in itself.

Holmes himself viewed his work as being the perfect subject matter for teaching, as he scolded Watson in "The Copper Beeches."



"Crime is common. Logic is rare. Therefore it is upon the logic rather than upon the crime that you should dwell. You have degraded what should have been a course of lectures into a series of tales."

But on occasion, it went beyond pure rhetoric as Sherlock Holmes allowed for question and answer time. While this isn't purely the Socratic method—because his questioners are merely looking for answers rather than engaging in debate or trying to disprove him—it does give Holmes's audience an opportunity to ask him questions.

So once again, the expert sits at the front of the classroom, ready to inform and dazzle his students. One could only wish for such a conclusion at Baker Street Elementary...

MY DISGUISE IS ALMOST FINISHED... WITH THE CHANGE IN APPEARANCE, I SHALL BE ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDE MY CURRENT INVESTIGATION



I DON'T SEE MUCH OF A CHANGE.

THUS THE BEAUTY... JUST A FEW SUBTLE IMPROVEMENTS.



DIRT ON THE SHOES, A LITTLE GREASE ON THE PANTS AND HANDS, AND SMUDGES ON MY FACE WILL TURN ME INTO YOUR AVERAGE STREET URCHIN...



ONE OF MY NEWEST DISCOVERIES... A COMBINATION OF IRON POWDER, CHARCOAL, AND TABLE SALT WILL ADD BLACK, GRAY AND PALE SMUDGES TO MY VISAGE...

<< uh... >> HOLMES...



YES WATSON, I KNOW THERE ARE COMMERCIAL MAKE-UPS FOR ACTORS ON THE MARKET, BUT MY OWN CREATION WILL BE MUCH MORE REALISTIC...

<< uh... >> HOLMES...



NO, I WILL NOT LET YOU CHRONICLE MY DISCOVERY UNTIL YEARS FROM NOW

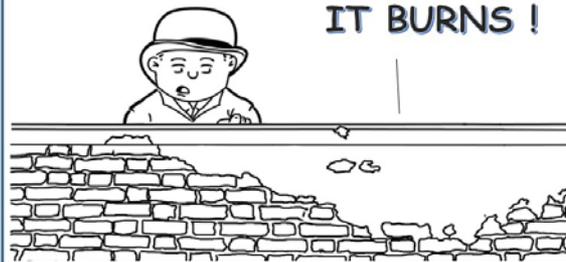


IF YOU HAD PAID JUST A LITTLE MORE ATTENTION IN CHEMISTRY, YOU WOULD KNOW THAT COMBINATION WILL PRODUCE A RAPID EXOTHERMIC REACTION, JUST ABOUT NOW...



ONCE AGAIN, A SUPER SLEUTH IN TRAINING IS TAKEN DOWN BY HIS OWN GREAT INTELLECT... YOU'RE RIGHT, I WILL KEEP THIS UNDER WRAPS.

AARRGGHH !!
IT BURNS !

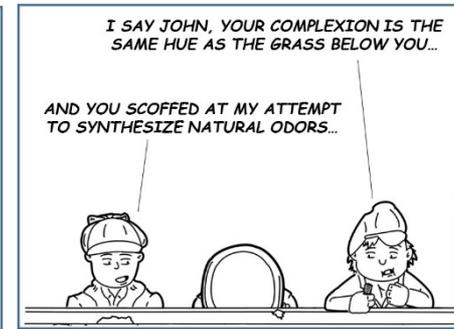
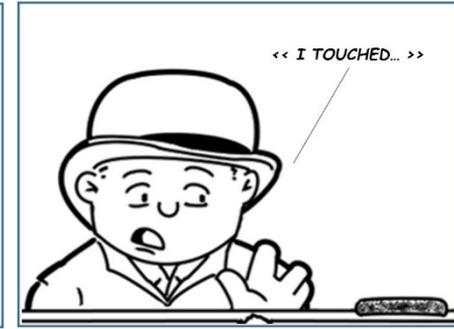
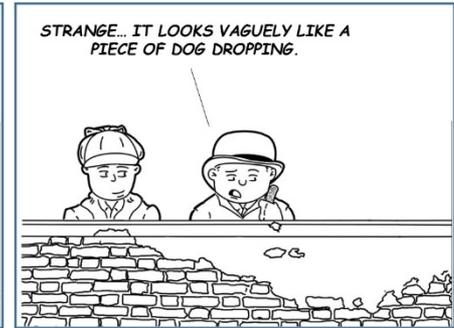
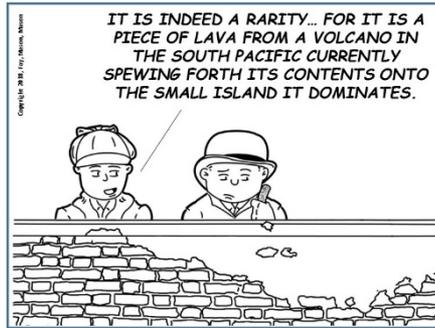


Who among us doesn't like a good practical joke? Well, the obvious answer to that rhetorical question would be the one upon whom the joke is played. But let's stick to the other end of it for present. For we feel it is our duty to share our findings with you.

Practical jokes are typically pranks that are played on an unsuspecting individual, in the hopes to embarrass them or cause them some level of societal discomfort. So they're different and separate from jokes that are told for a laugh, where we find common humor and stories to bring us together.

While we don't think of the Sherlock Holmes stories as being the place where we might find such humor, there are a few instances of characters mentioning this form of joke. For example, in "The Red-Headed League," Jabez Wilson was put out after learning that the League was dissolved and that he had been bamboozled.

Meanwhile, for the truly revolting practical joke, we turn to Baker Street Elementary...

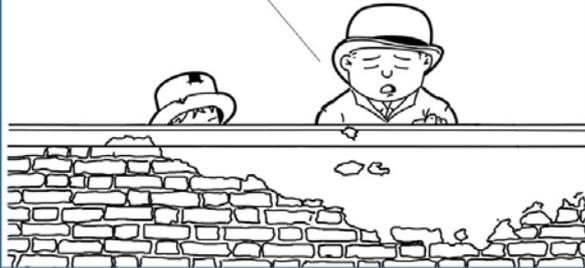


BIRDS ARE FLYING, FLOWERS ARE BLOOMING AND GRASS IS GREENING... YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?



YES MASTER BLAU... MY NOSE IS RUNNING LIKE A STEAM ENGINE... THE POLLEN IS KILLING ME...

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NO SILLY, IT IS TIME FOR OUR ANNUAL SPRING PLAY... THIS YEAR WE WILL BE DOING THE CLASSIC, "ROMEO AND JULIET"



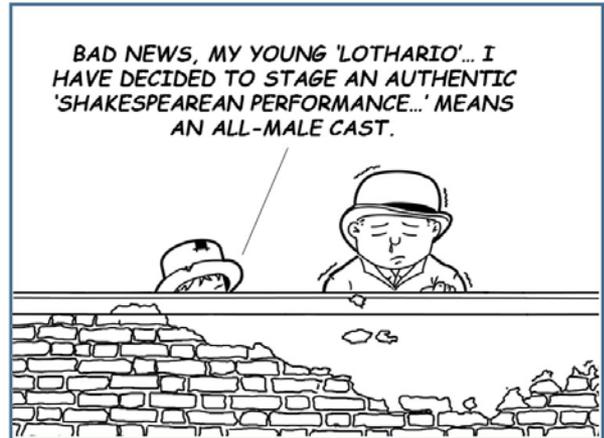
I HAVE SELECTED YOU FOR THE LEAD.



GREAT... AT LEAST I CAN HONE MY SMOOCHING SKILLS ON WHICHEVER GIRL YOU SELECT AS 'JULIET' FROM THE OTHER SCHOOL...



BAD NEWS, MY YOUNG 'LOTHARIO'... I HAVE DECIDED TO STAGE AN AUTHENTIC 'SHAKESPEAREAN PERFORMANCE...' MEANS AN ALL-MALE CAST.



In *A Study in Scarlet*, we're getting to know Sherlock Holmes through the eyes of Dr. Watson. The good doctor noted some of the peculiarities of his friend and fellow lodger Mr. Sherlock Holmes, and he put together that helpful list that has defined what Sherlock Holmes was capable of.

Sherlock Holmes—his limits.

Knowledge of Literature.—Nil; Philosophy.—Nil; Astronomy.—Nil; Politics.—Feeble; Botany.—Variable; Geology.—Practical, but limited; Chemistry.—Profound; Anatomy.—Accurate, but unsystematic; Sensational Literature.—Immense; Plays the violin well; Is an expert singlestick player, boxer, and swordsman; Has a good practical knowledge of British law.

As an aside, isn't it interesting that Sherlockians somehow always come back to that famous list when analyzing Sherlock Holmes? As if that snapshot of life at Baker Street dictates how the Great Detective would forever exist, frozen in amber.

But we know for certain that such is not the case. Holmes became quite philosophical in his 'rose soliloquy' in "The Naval Treaty":

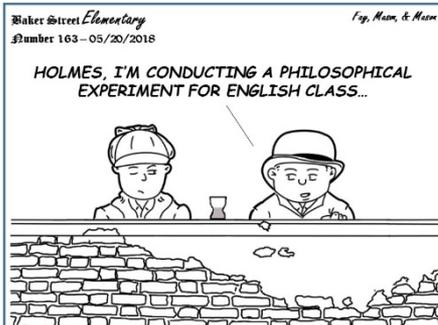
"There is nothing in which deduction is so necessary as in religion," said he, leaning with his back against the shutters. "It can be built up as an exact science by the reasoner. Our highest assurance of the goodness of Providence seems to me to rest in the flowers. All other things, our powers our desires, our food, are all really necessary for our existence in the first instance. But this rose is an extra. Its smell and its color are an embellishment of life, not a condition of it. It is only goodness which gives extras, and so I say again that we have much to hope from the flowers."

Watson himself was taken aback, but ascribed it more as naturalism than philosophy, noting that it was "a new phase of his character to me, for I had never before seen him show any keen interest in natural objects."

Over the years, though, Holmes clearly became quite reflective. In the Preface to *His Last Bow*, Watson fills in the gaps from decades of their acquaintance:

"He has, for many years, lived in a small farm upon the downs five miles from Eastbourne, where his time is divided **between philosophy and agriculture.**"

So, once again it's that confluence of nature and philosophy we witnessed in "The Naval Treaty." Where did Holmes get it from. Perhaps it can be linked to an early experience at Baker Street Elementary...



SO JOHN, I UNDERSTAND YOUR GOLF LESSONS ARE GOING FAIRLY WELL.



I AM NOT TOO SURE... I ASKED MY PRIVATE INSTRUCTOR WHAT I AM DOING WRONG?



AND HIS DIAGNOSIS?

THAT I AM STILL STANDING TOO CLOSE TO THE BALL AFTER I HIT IT...



HOW IS THE CADDYING AT THE CLUB GOING FOR YOU ON THE WEEKENDS?

I WAS LET GO AFTER MY LAST PATRON COMPLAINED.



WHAT WAS HIS ISSUE?

AFTER A REALLY BAD ROUND, HE COMMENTED, "I WAS THE WORST CADDIE IN THE WORLD..."



I REPLIED, "THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, THAT WOULD BE TOO MUCH OF A COINCIDENCE... NO SENSE OF HUMOR."



What was Sherlock Holmes's sense of humor like? Did he even have a sense of humor? It wasn't until "The Priory School" (the 31st story, part of The Return of Sherlock Holmes) that we read about Holmes's "admirable good humour."

Not long afterward in "Black Peter" we see "Well, well," said Holmes, good-humouredly. "We all learn by experience." Similarly in "The Three Students," Sherlock Holmes had been performing some research on early English charters when he was interrupted by Hilton Soames with a problem, and Holmes didn't want distractions. But soon, Watson wrote that Holmes "was recovering his good-humour as his attention became more engrossed by the case." Both stories were in The Return.

Of course, the most frequently cited and widely recognized turn of phrase regarding humor is in The Valley of Fear, in which Holmes comments on Watson's little joke:

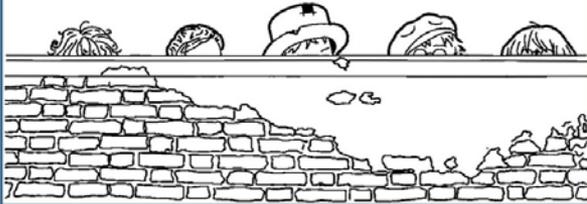
"A touch! A distinct touch!" cried Holmes. "You are developing a certain unexpected vein of pawky humour, Watson, against which I must learn to guard myself."

If we can infer Sherlock Holmes's sense of humor by his physical reactions - that is, his smiles, chuckles and laughter - there are opportunities to do that. As early as A Study in Scarlet and "A Scandal in Bohemia," we have the simple phrase "Holmes laughed." Soon afterword we find "Holmes laughed softly to himself," [BOSC] and again "Holmes laughed" [BLUE].

And so we head over to Baker Street Elementary, where as at most schools, the boys are busy trying to crack each other up...

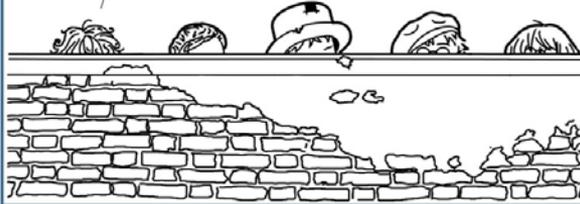


MASTER PETER, I WANT TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON CHOOSING 'ROMEO AND JULIET' AS THE SHAKESPEAREAN PLAY THIS SPRING...



OH YES, IT IS THE GREATEST LOVE STORY OF ALL TIME...

AU CONTRAIRE, MADAMOISELLE...



THE GREATEST LOVE STORY ISN'T ROMEO AND JULIET, WHO DIED TOGETHER AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE, BUT MY GRANDPARENTS, WHO HAVE GROWN OLD TOGETHER, AND ARE STILL IN LOVE...



OH, YOU ARE ALL CURMUDGEONS... MASTER BRAD, I WAGER YOU LOVE THE ROMANTIC STORYLINE...

MISS CHRISTINA, IT'S A 3-DAY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A 13-YEAR-OLD AND A 17-YEAR-OLD THAT RESULTS IN 6 DEATHS.



MAYBE ROMEO SHOULD HAVE CONTINUED PURSUING ROSALINE...

JULIET WOULD STILL BE ALIVE IF SHE HAD STUCK WITH PARIS...



LISTENING TO YOU MALES, I FEEL MY BRAIN COMMITTING SUICIDE, ONE CELL AT A TIME...

DRINK SOME BRANDY...



One of the early and surprising elements of the Sherlock Holmes Canon is when Irene Adler, dressed as a man, confirmed her suspicions after Sherlock Holmes invaded her home, walking by 221B Baker Street and saying, "Good night, Mr. Sherlock Holmes."

She later explained in her letter that she disguised herself as a man in order to ascertain that.

But interestingly, she also added, "I often take advantage of the freedom which it gives."

Irene Adler came from a theatrical background, having retired from the stage.

So she must have seen her fair share of men dressed as women, in the Shakespearean tradition, where men played female roles for the first few hundred years of performances.

But what about the other way around - women taking on male roles? It would seem almost unheard of in Victorian times.

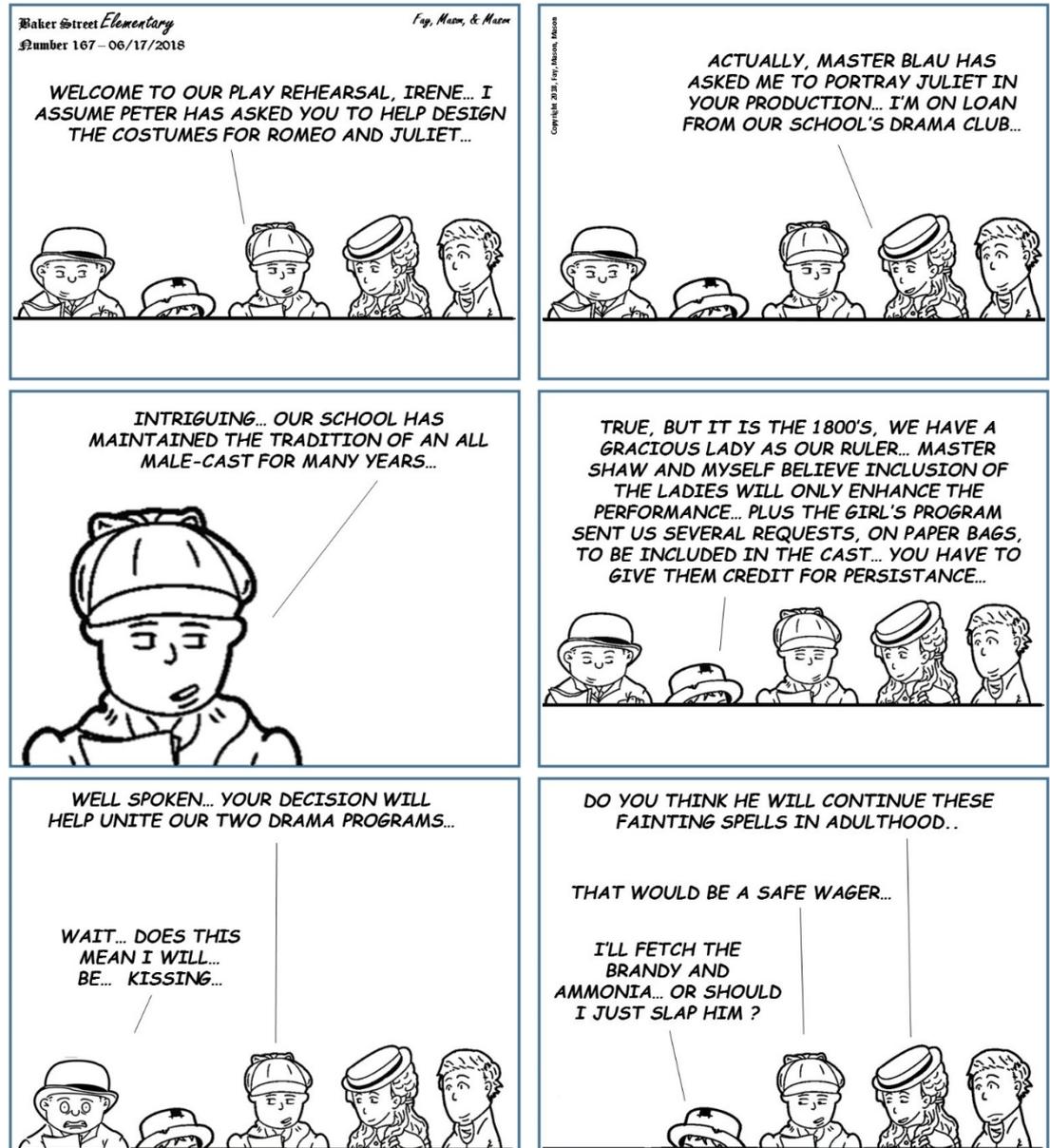
Or would it?

Ellen Terry, a leading Shakespearean actress in the late Victorian / early Edwardian period, wrote that a debt was owed to Shakespeare "for his vindication of women in [his] fearless, high-spirited, resolute and intelligent heroines."

Terry should know. as she played the cross-dressing Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* as early as 1875.

And let's not forget the legendary Sarah Bernhardt, who played the title role in *Hamlet* in 1899.

Similarly, the boys at Baker Street Elementary decide it's time to broaden their theatrical casting...



WHAT WOULD YOU CALL AN ADULT SAPLING
WITH A TRUNK MADE COMPLETELY OF FIRE,
AND ITS BRANCHES MADE OF ICE, DIRT,
AND WIND?

AFRAID TO ASK,
BUT WHAT ?



AN ELEMENT TREE !! PUNS
ARE SO PART OF MY LIFE...



There are a number of people in the Sherlock Holmes stories who wear glasses: Jephro Rucastle, Charles Augustus Milverton, Lord Robert St. Simon, Hosmer Angel, Wilson Kemp - are you sensing a pattern here?

Each person is of questionable character. We might say villains, but Lord St. Simon isn't particularly villainous; rather he is motivated by monetary interests. A thin line, you might say, but still.

Glasses play a central role in "The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez," with the named object being found in the clutches of the murdered secretary. The strength of the prescription indicated that the suspect was "extremely short-sighted," and Holmes deduced that "anyone who wore such glasses could be slatternly in other respects." You might be interested in more about pince-nez; please click through to our Trifles episode "A History of Pince-Nez" for more.

And we come to discover quite a bit about the checkered history of Professor Coram and Anna as the case concludes. One might even deign to judge the character of Anna based on a number of decisions she made over the course of her life, both forced and voluntary.

Perhaps the strength of her prescription correlates to the strain of flaws in her? Lots of discussion on this story is in the book *The Wrong Passage* from the BSI Press Manuscript Series.

When it comes to the parentage of John H. Watson, good taste, and eyeglasses, one has to wonder what other character traits Holmes might deduce when the boys of Baker Street Elementary get talking...



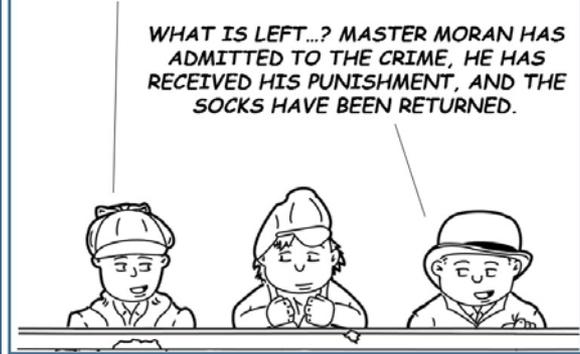
HOLMES, THE SCHOOL PAPER HAS PUBLISHED A BRILLIANT WRITE-UP ON YOUR SOLUTION TO THE MISSING GYMNASIUM SOCKS MYSTERY.



I FELT 'THE ADVENTURE OF THE BOGUS LAUNDRY AFFAIR' WAS AN INSPIRED TITLE ON MY PART. I AM ALSO PROUD OF THE NARRATIVE I PUT TOGETHER.

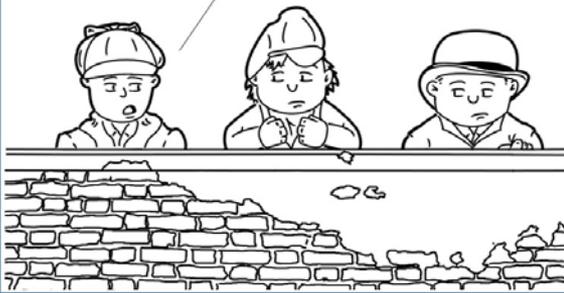


YET I FEEL THAT MYSTERY IS NOT COMPLETELY RESOLVED.



WHAT IS LEFT...? MASTER MORAN HAS ADMITTED TO THE CRIME, HE HAS RECEIVED HIS PUNISHMENT, AND THE SOCKS HAVE BEEN RETURNED.

I DO NOT BELIEVE HE ACTED ALONE. THERE IS A CENTRAL POWER BEHIND THE AGENT, NOT SUSPECTED BY THE SCHOOL'S ADMINISTRATION.



THIS DEEP ORGANIZING POWER STANDS IN THE WAY OF THE LAW, AND THROWS ITS SHIELD OVER ALL OF THE WRONGDOERS WITHIN THIS SCHOOL.



AGAIN AND AGAIN I HAVE FELT THE PRESENCE OF THIS FORCE.



THIS IS CREEPY. OR JUST AN OVER-ACTIVE IMAGINATION.



I WILL SEIZE UPON A THREAD, AND FOLLOW IT, EVEN IF IT LEADS ME THROUGH A THOUSAND CUNNING WIDINGS, UNTIL I DISCOVER THE TRUTH.



AND THIS MY FRIENDS, IS NOT-SO-SUBTLE FORESHADOWING.



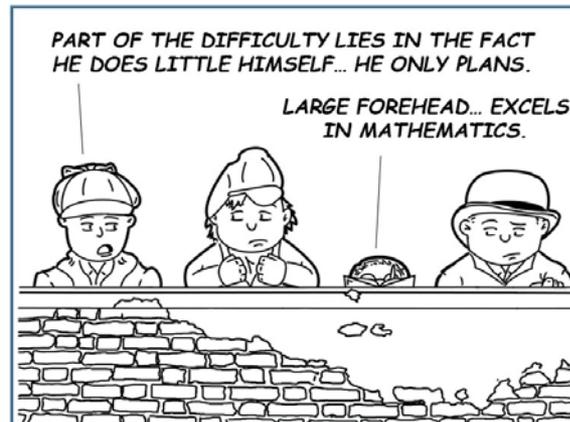
CAN YOU FORESHADOW THE COMPLETE CRACK-UP OF A FRIEND ?

In "The Final Problem," Sherlock Holmes said that Professor Moriarty was "a genius, a philosopher, an abstract thinker." He also said "Mediocrity knows nothing higher than itself; but talent instantly recognizes genius," in The Valley of Fear. Interestingly, those are both stories in which Moriarty played a role. It seems fairly certain how Sherlock Holmes considered himself compared with the professor.

But when it came to sharing his observations - not only on his arch-nemesis, but on his method of observation and logic - Sherlock Holmes was only too willing to give a monologue. Watson's role was one of audience member rather than flatmate or colleague. It was clear that Holmes needed to give his soliloquies to someone, and Watson was the perfect foil.

William James wrote: "Geniuses differ from ordinary men less in the character of their attention than in the nature of the objects upon which it is successively bestowed." And it seemed clear that Holmes's attention was on the problems at hand, rather than on his sole friend.

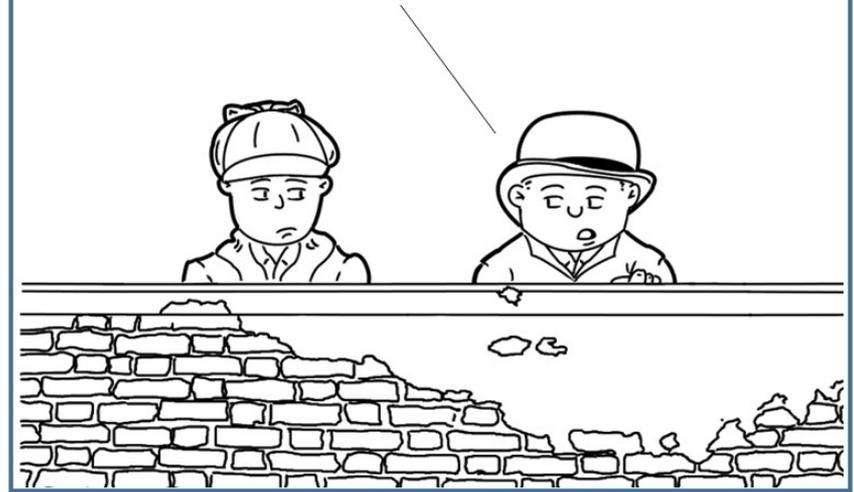
And it looks like the boys of Baker Street Elementary got an early clue about that behavior...



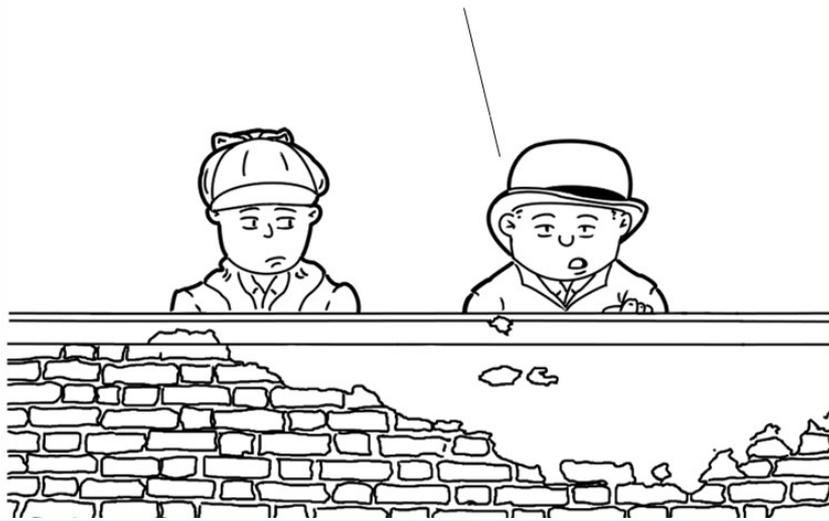
SOMEWHERE IN RUSSIA, I BELIEVE THERE IS A YOUNG BOY, MUCH LIKE YOU AND I, WHO YEARNS FOR A LIFE OF FREEDOM.



... AND HE HAS HEARD OF OUR OWN JOLLY OL' ENGLAND... HE DREAMS OF LIVING IN SUCH A LAND OF FREEDOM.

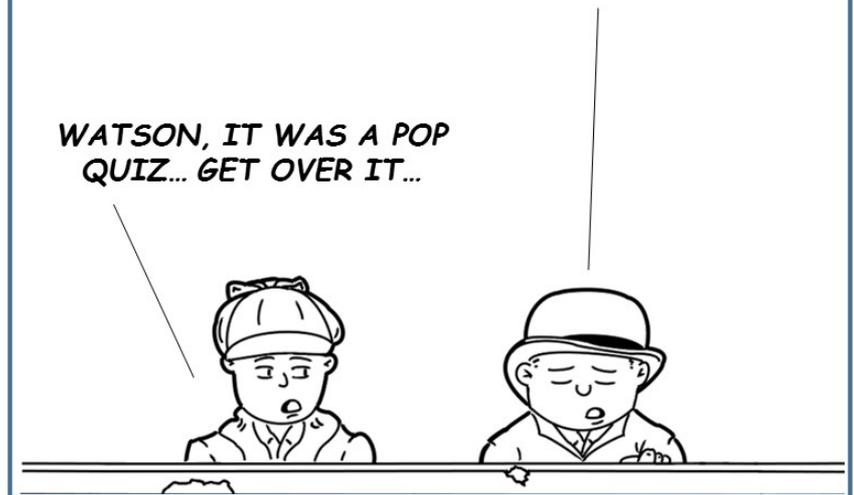


I WANT TO PERSONALLY MEET THAT FINE, YOUNG LAD...



... AND TELL THE PAINFUL TRUTH ABOUT THIS PLACE WE CALL HOME...

WATSON, IT WAS A POP QUIZ... GET OVER IT...



Oh, how the class clown fascinates us. He (and it's typically a boy) has an oversized sense of humor, and knows how to employ it to the amusement of his classmates and the annoyance of his teacher. Humor is a tough thing for anyone in front of a group. It's hit or miss. In many ways, it's like being an acrobat.

When you see an opportunity, you go for it, hoping you don't slip and fall. Especially when there's no net. Sherlock Holmes did make a few attempts at humor - in some cases with more snark and insult ("The Three Gables," anyone?) - but knew enough to stay away for the most part. But he did know a thing or two about Niagara Falls.

In *A Study in Scarlet*, Watson read from "The Book of Life":

"From a drop of water," said the writer, "a logician could infer the possibility of an Atlantic or a Niagara without having seen or heard of one or the other. So all life is a great chain, the nature of which is known whenever we are shown a single link of it."

He quickly discovered that it was Sherlock Holmes himself who had written that article. While it may have seemed fanciful, it was quite obvious that a drop of water had an origin somewhere else, and likely had friends with which it congregated.

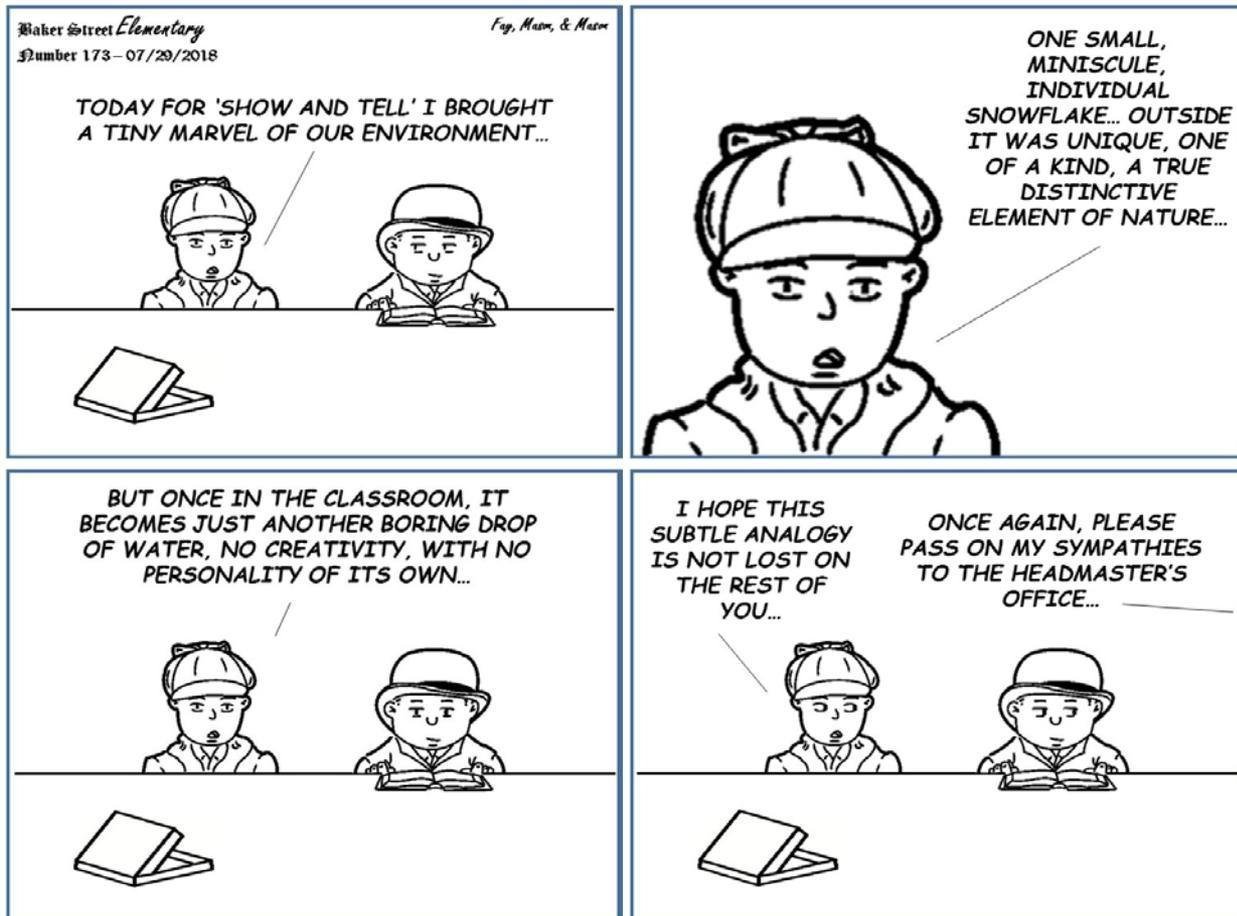
And to Holmes, foreseeing a Niagara Falls was a simple logical inference.

And if you've got such a natural wonder as Niagara Falls, why not make use of it? So thought Jean François Gravelet, otherwise known as Charles Blondin. Blondin first crossed the Niagara on tightrope on June 30, 1859, and made a name for himself. You can read about his life and other exploits in that link above, including an instance in which a tightrope crossing gone wrong cost two men their lives.

But Holmes fancied himself a Blondin (which by that time had become a generic name for anyone in the tightrope-walking profession) in *The Sign of Four*: "Now run down-stairs, loose the dog, and look out for Blondin."

You see, at that moment, Sherlock Holmes was planning to walk the roofline of Pondicherry Lodge.

But back at Baker Street Elementary, young Master Sherlock finds himself walking a very different tightrope altogether...



THE TEACHER HAS CHALLENGED
ME TO SPEAK UP MORE DURING
THE CLASS DISCUSSIONS...

THAT SHOULD
BE EASY...



YOU KNOW, I CONSIDER MYSELF
A CHILD OF FEW WORDS...



MAYBE IF YOU READ MORE,
YOU WOULD INCREASE
YOUR VOCABULARY...



ON THE FIELD TRIP YESTERDAY, I NOTICED THE MAIN BRIDGE HAD A SIGN WHICH READ, "WEIGHT LIMIT: 12 TONNES".



HOW DO THEY DETERMINE HOW MUCH WEIGHT THE BRIDGE CAN HOLD?



IT IS REALLY AN AMAZING FEAT OF ENGINEERING, USING SOME VERY COMPLICATED...

...ACTUALLY IT'S QUITE SIMPLE.



1. THEY BUILD THE BRIDGE;
2. THEY STACK DRUMS FILLED WITH WATER ONTO THE BRIDGE UNTIL IT COLLAPSES;
3. THEY WEIGH THE DRUMS;
4. THEY REBUILD THE BRIDGE;
5. AND, THEY PUT THE SIGN UP.



AND YOU SAID IT WAS COMPLICATED...



ENGINEERS THROUGHOUT ENGLAND JUST COLLECTIVELY SHUDDERED...

I WONDER IF THEY ERECT BUILDINGS THE SAME WAY?



One of the challenges of running this biweekly comic strip (something we've been doing every other Sunday since February 2017) is coming up with relevant and entertaining commentary to preface each strip.

We secretly think that the Baker Street Elementary crew deliberately tries to stump us, which makes us try even harder.

In this case, if Watson assessed our knowledge of engineering like he assessed Sherlock Holmes's knowledge of various topics in *A Study in Scarlet*, it would fall somewhere between "nil" and "feeble."

However, our appreciation for puns, witticisms, and wordplay would be on the "profound" level. As such, we developed a few alternate titles for this particular strip, including:

- The Problem of More Bridge
- The Engineer's Dumb (imagine our surprise when we discovered it had already been used!)
- The Nor-Would Builder
- Knowledge of Engineering — Practical (Joking)

Perhaps our readers have suggestions for some pun-laden titles? Leave them in a comment below if you do.

Meanwhile, the boys at Baker Street Elementary befuddle their physics and mathematics tutors...

I LEARNED A VALUABLE LESSON IN
NEGOTIATION AND COMPROMISE
THIS WEEKEND...

WHICH WAS?



I ASKED FOR AN INCREASE IN MY
ALLOWANCE FROM MY FATHER, DUE TO THE
INCREASE IN COSTS AT THE LOCAL
CONFECTIONER... MY NEGOTIATION PLOY
WAS TO START HIGH AND THEN GO DOWN...



HE THEN EXPLAINED HE HAD CALCULATED
HOW MANY POUNDS IT WAS GOING TO
COST TO RAISE ME TO ADULTHOOD...

THIS CAN'T END
WELL...



HE THEN ASKED WHETHER I THOUGHT THOSE
FUNDS SHOULD BE A "GRANT" OR A "LOAN
WITH INTEREST"?



AND WHAT PART WAS THE
COMPROMISE?



IF I DROPPED THE ISSUE, I WOULD
BE ABLE TO SIT DOWN FOR THE
REST OF THE WEEKEND...



If there's one thing that plagues every writer from time to time, it's writer's block. That is, the inability to create something due to a lack of ideas, or an inability to proceed.

When counseling others in this regard, some writers offer the helpful advice: "Just write something!" The notion is that, through the process of typing away in a stream of consciousness, the block will lift.

When one considers that Conan Doyle wrote 60 Sherlock Holmes stories (that's four novels and 56 short stories, for you folks following along at home), and that most of them had unique plots (we'll forgive him the similarities between "The Red-Headed League" and "The Three Garridebs" as one example), he did remarkably well.

YES MA'AM, I DO BELIEVE YOU ARE PARTIALLY TO BLAME FOR MY LOW GRADE...



YOUR TESTS ARE BIASED TOWARD THOSE STUDENTS WHO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS CORRECTLY, AND NOT ENOUGH CREDIT IS GIVEN TO THOSE WHO ANSWER THEM CREATIVELY...

SO MY ANSWERS ARE CREATIVE...?



We're up to the 40th installment of Baker Street Elementary, and now have our greatest challenge to date. The Fay-Masons are determined to stump the band. And we nearly succumbed as well. As Neil Gibson said to Holmes in "The Problem of Thor Bridge,"

"I have broken stronger men than you. No man ever crossed me and was the better for it."

And we take great pride in responding as Sherlock Holmes did: "So many have said so, and yet here I am," said Holmes, smiling.

Onward, to the creative grounds of Baker Street Elementary we go...

Question 1: Please summarize your three favorite Shakespearean plays in less than 200 words...



EASY... HAMLET, EVERYONE DIES; MACBETH, EVERYONE DIES; KING LEAR, EVERYONE DIES !!

ANOTHER MIGRAINE FOR THE TEACHER...



Question 2: Describe your favorite Shakespearean character in less than 100 words...

I DON'T LIKE ANY OF THEM...



EASIER... MACBETH, WHO KILLED CHICKENS... AFTER ALL, HE COMMITTED "A MURDER MOST FOUL... I DON'T LIKE CHICKENS..."

SHE'LL NEED A WEEK OF LEAVE !!



Over the years, we've seen a number of creative approaches to Sherlockian material through poetry.

For example, at one Autumn in Baker Street, we heard The Hound of the Baskervilles recited in the style of Robert Service.

Isaac Asimov is legendary for his Sherlockian Limericks. Each BSI Weekend we look forward to the annual year-in-review poem in doggerel, written and performed by Al Rosenblatt, BSI ("Inspector Bradstreet") and Betsy Rosenblatt, BSI ("Lucy Ferrier").

And then there are the classics. Vincent Starrett's immortal "221B," which gave us the now-legendary phrase "it's always 1895," and is often recited at the conclusion to Sherlockian society meetings.

Or another favorite meeting-closer, Bill Schweikert's moving "A Long Evening With Holmes."

And the elusive and mysterious poetess laureate of the BSI, Helene Yuhasova.

Yes, we have plenty of poetry that touches on Sherlock Holmes.

It's no mystery that when we link the heart and the mind, the magic happens - just like at Baker Street Elementary...



YES MA'AM, WE COMPLETED THE GROUP
READING PROJECT - THE HUNCHBACK OF
NOTRE DAME. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR
EXPANDING OUR MINDS AGAIN WITH
SUCH A CHALLENGING NARRATIVE.



I COULD ALMOST FEEL THE SARCASM
DRIPPING OFF THAT STATEMENT.

MA'AM, DID YOU KNOW 'QUASIMODO'
ACTUALLY HAD A TWIN BROTHER?



OH NO, HERE WE GO AGAIN...

HIS NAME WAS 'QUEASIMODO'
AND HE HELD THE SAME
OCCUPATION AS HIS SIBLING...



SADLY, HE DIED JUST ONE
DAY AFTER QUASIMODO DID.



MOURNERS AT HIS FUNERAL HAD A 'HUNCH'
HE WOULD BE 'BACK,' AND BELIEVED HIM
TO BE A 'DEAD-RINGER' FOR HIS BROTHER...



HAVE EITHER OF YOU NOTICED THE
TEACHER MIMING 'HANGING
HERSELF' MORE OFTEN LATELY ?



Who among us hasn't been tempted to short-cut assigned classroom reading with CliffsNotes or York Notes, in those pre-Internet days when Wikipedia wasn't readily available?

Well, the more literary-inclined have not - a group to which Sherlockians generally tend to gravitate - but for the masses, let's agree they may have. We're reminded of Watson's recounting of his doings in Hereford with Sherlock Holmes in "The Boscombe Valley Mystery," whiling away his time while Holmes ran down a few clues:

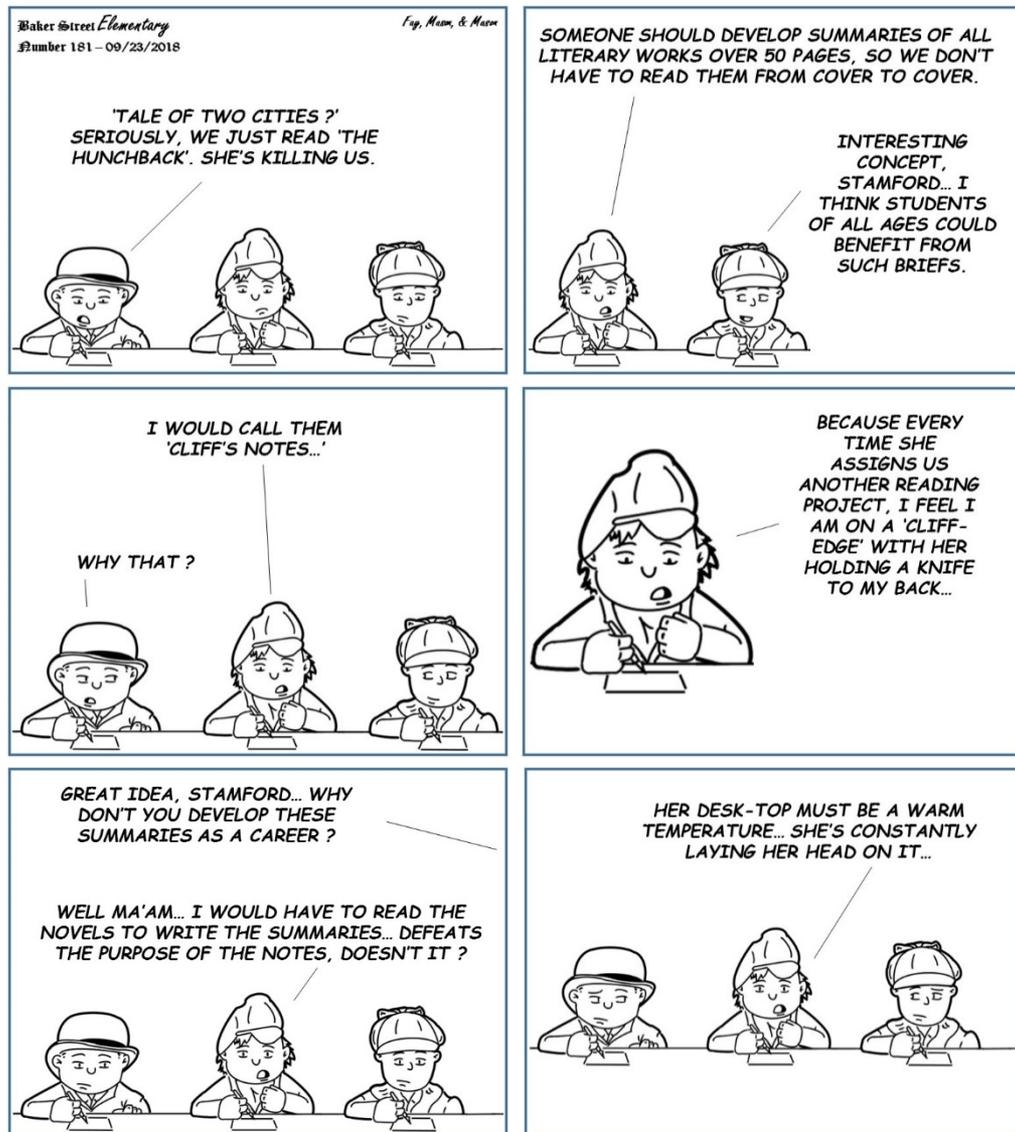
"I walked down to the station with them, and then wandered through the streets of the little town, finally returning to the hotel, where I lay upon the sofa and tried to interest myself in a yellow-backed novel."

A yellow-backed novel? Was Watson perusing an early version of CliffsNotes? Hardly.

Yellow-backed novels were cheap (sixpenny or shilling) editions of a book with illustrated covers of glazed and vividly illustrated yellow boards, intended for railway travellers.

"The first 'yellowbacks' were published in 1847 by Simms and McIntyre, and other publishers quickly followed suit, such as Routeledge, Chapman & Hall, Frederick Warne, Maxwell, Chatto & Windus, and Ward, Lock, & Co. ACD's work twice appeared in this format: the reissue of the anthology *Strange Secrets*, issued by Chatto & Windus in 1890, and *A Study in Scarlet* issued by Lever Brothers in 1894. The yellowback was superseded by the sixpenny paperback novel at the end of the century."

So it stands to reason that Watson, a railway traveller to Hereford, would have a yellow-back novel in his possession. Interesting too that the plot of "The Boscombe Valley Mystery" involved what seemed to be patricide.



WHY WAS I NOT IN
CLASS YESTERDAY... A
FUNNY STORY...



Fay, Mason, & Mason

Baker Street Elementary
Number 182 - 09/30/2018

MY PARENTS FORGOT
TO GET THE SUNDAY
PAPER OFF THE PORCH...



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...AND WHEN I
FOUND IT
MONDAY, I
THOUGHT IT
WAS
SUNDAY...

YOU'RE NOT
LAUGHING...



To the external world, Sherlockians must seem like a strange bunch.

We get together, often multiple times a year, in venues to eat, drink and listen to talks about a figure who dates from the 1880s.

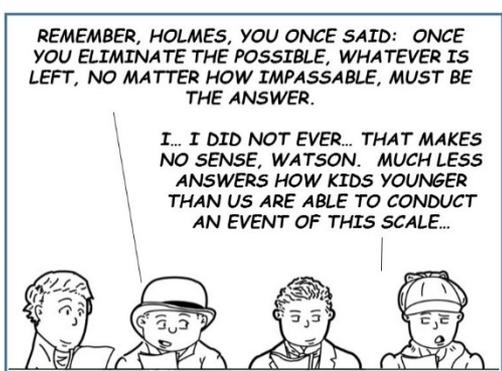
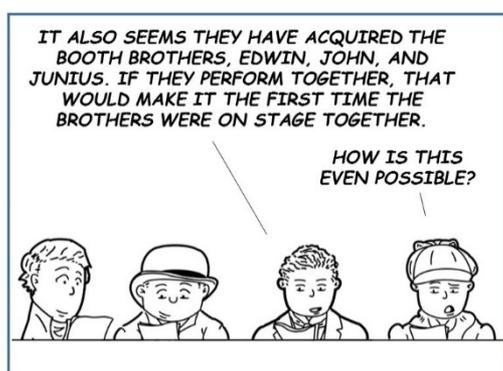
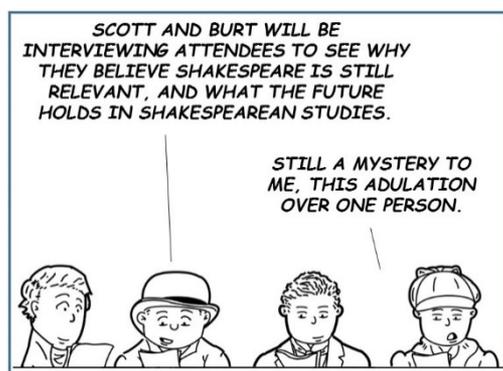
Some take part in Victorian cosplay, others argue that Sherlock Holmes was fictional (can you imagine?), and many debate over who was the best impersonator of Holmes on stage or screen.

This weekend marked the highly anticipated From Gillette to Brett V conference in Bloomington, Indiana, where 140 Sherlockians gathered to celebrate multiple iterations of Sherlock Holmes over the years. Peter Cushing, Basil Rathbone, Arthur Wontner, Jeremy Brett, Jonny Lee Miller, and even Michael Caine were part of the program.

In one recorded interview with Jeremy Brett, he showed his appreciation for the admiration he received, but was very quick to point out that he would be supplanted by someone else as the next generation found its ideal Sherlock Holmes.

This is of course nothing new to those who have followed great works of literature whose main characters have been reinvented, recreated, and resurrected for generation after generation.

In fact, the boys at Baker Street Elementary may be learning about one of those authors...



HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED HOW HARD IT WOULD HAVE BEEN TO BE AN INSURANCE AGENT IN NURSERY RHYME LAND ?

WHAT ARE YOU BABBLING ABOUT ?



THINK ABOUT IT... THE PIGS' HOUSES ARE BLOWN OVER BY AN ANIMAL... THE DISH IS CONSTANTLY STEALING CUTLERY FROM SOME POOR FARMER...



PERSONAL INJURIES FOR AN EGG WHO KEEPS FALLING OFF A WALL...

PAPA'S ILL-CONCEIVED PURCHASES (RINGS TURNING TO BRASS, LOOKING-GLASS BREAKING, CART AND BULL TURNING OVER)...



OLD MEN KNOCKING THEMSELVES OUT IN THE MORNING IN BED...

POOR JACK BREAKS HIS CROWN... AND JILL WITH BODY INJURIES...



HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO REPLACE A FLOCK OF LOST SHEET... AND HOW DO YOU INSURE A 'TUFFET'?

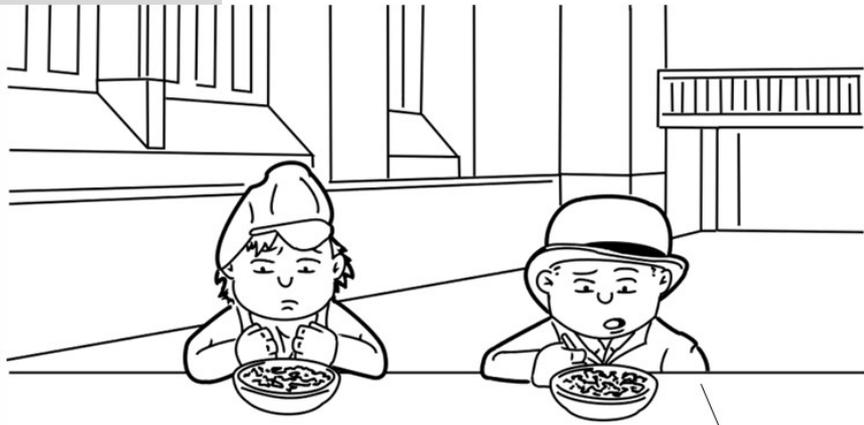
LOTS OF LIABILITY WHEN YOU SELL 9-DAY OLD PORRIDGE TO YOUR CUSTOMERS...



EXPLAINS WHY PEOPLE'S CUPBOARDS WERE BARE... THEY COULDN'T AFFORD THE PREMIUMS...

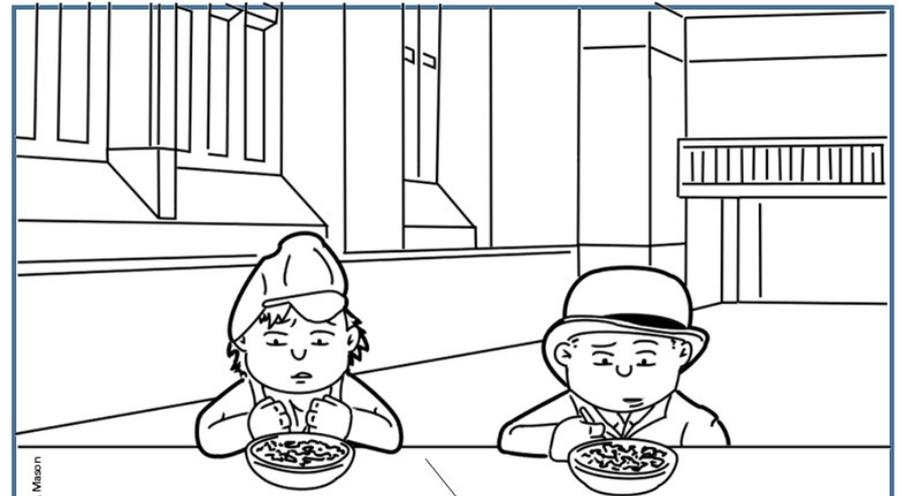
WONDER WHAT THE INSURANCE RATES WERE ON A HABITABLE SHOE...?





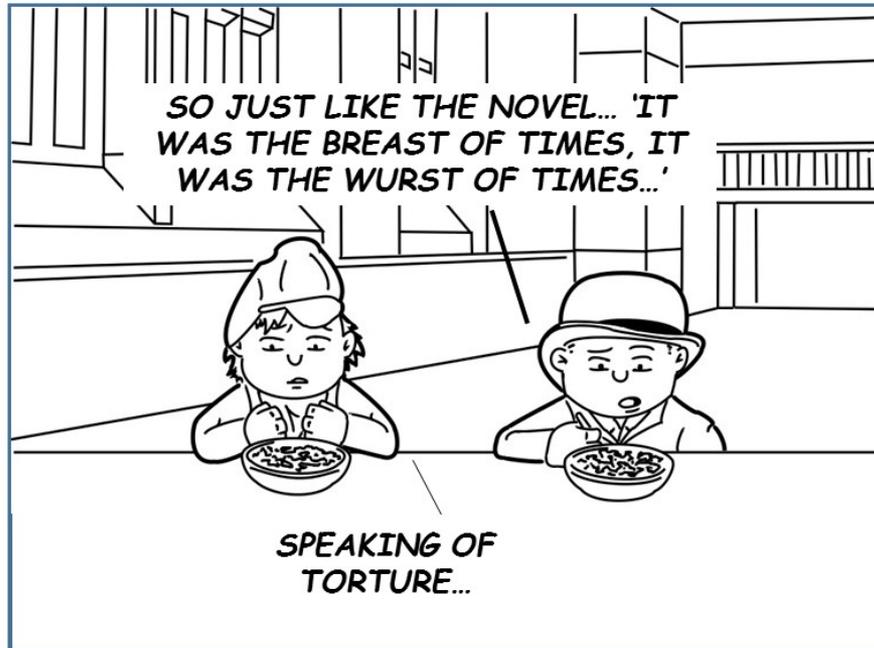
**WHAT TORTURE ARE THEY
INFLICTING ON US TODAY ?**

Fog, Mearns & Mearns



**YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS
MINE: CHICKEN OR SAUSAGE...?**

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**SO JUST LIKE THE NOVEL... 'IT
WAS THE BREAST OF TIMES, IT
WAS THE WURST OF TIMES...'**

**SPEAKING OF
TORTURE...**

Sherlockians have been accused of being somewhat...singular. Our hobby is a precursor of many others that have risen to more mainstream occultism, such as fans of Star Trek, Star Wars, and the hundreds of others that can make up attendance of Comic Con.

We've often said that at a Sherlockian society event, you'll meet everyone from plumbers to presidents, and everyone in between. Our gatherings are easily a cross-section of humanity, all held together with Canonical-strength glue.

Now perhaps we can delve into our lesson plans and put together a comprehensive guide...

Baker Street Elementary
Number 186 - 10/21/2018

Fog, Moon, & Moon

**... MEANWHILE,
IN THE U.S.**

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BURT, WE RECEIVED A NOTE FROM MASTER JOHN WATSON

REALLY? WHAT DOES HE HAVE TO SAY?



"SCOTT AND BURT... PLEASE PASS ON MY CONGRATULATIONS TO MARK AND STEVE ON THE SUCCESSFUL SHAKESPEAREAN CONFERENCE... IT APPEARS THE ENTIRE PROGRAM, INCLUDING THE NEW PLAY, WAS EXCELLENT... THEY SHOULD BE PROUD..."



HE GOES ON TO SAY... "WE ARE VERY ENVIOUS OF YOUR COUNTLESS AMERICAN SOCIETIES, FORMED TO STUDY AND HONOR THE MASTER... WE WOULD LIKE TO DO THE SAME..."



"SHERLOCK OPINES, 'JUST GATHER ALL YOUR FRIENDS WHO STILL LIVE IN THEIR PARENT'S BASEMENT OR ATTIC, AND WILL PROBABLY NEVER HAVE A REAL DATE... YOU NOW HAVE A SOCIETY...'"



THAT'S A LITTLE HARSH, DON'T YOU THINK...

DON'T YOU LIVE IN YOUR PARENT'S BASEMENT...???



"P.S... MAYBE ONE OF YOUR FUTURE DISPATCHES COULD FOCUS ON SOCIETIES (HOW TO FORM, RUN, OR MAINTAIN ONE... HINT, HINT)"



HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ON A DATE???



I AM IN THE PROVERBIAL
'DOG-HOUSE' AGAIN AT
HOME...

WHAT DID
YOU DO, OR
FAIL TO DO,
THIS TIME ?



TO SAVE THE EFFORT OF EMPTYING
A CHAMBERPOT, I CHOSE TO USE
THE GREAT OUTDOORS...

WE HAVE ALL DONE
THAT... HOW DID
THAT GET YOU IN
TROUBLE ?

UNLESS
WE'RE
TALKING #2



I CHOSE THAT
TIME TO PRACTICE
MY CURSIVE
WRITING SKILLS...

I ADMIT I USUALLY
ONLY PRINT IN THE
SNOW, BUT I STILL
DON'T SEE THAT
BEING A PROBLEM...



THERE WAS NO SNOW... I WAS PRACTICING ON
THE SHEETS DRYING ON THE LINE... AS I SAID, I
MAY AS WELL JUST PLAN ON LIVING THE REST
OF MY HOME-LIFE IN THE DOG-HOUSE...



THAT WAS ONE OF
THE EASIER
ESSAYS I HAVE
EVER TURNED IN... I
HOPE SHE SEES MY
POINT OF VIEW...

WILL MR. "NO
COMMENT"
PLEASE STAY
AFTER CLASS...



Bullying is nothing new. Amid the latest anti-bullying campaigns, it's instructive to note that humans have been dealing with bullies and aggressive behavior since our earliest days.

Even in the animal kingdom, we see instances of alpha male behavior and even exclusion of some weaker members of tribes by certain groups.

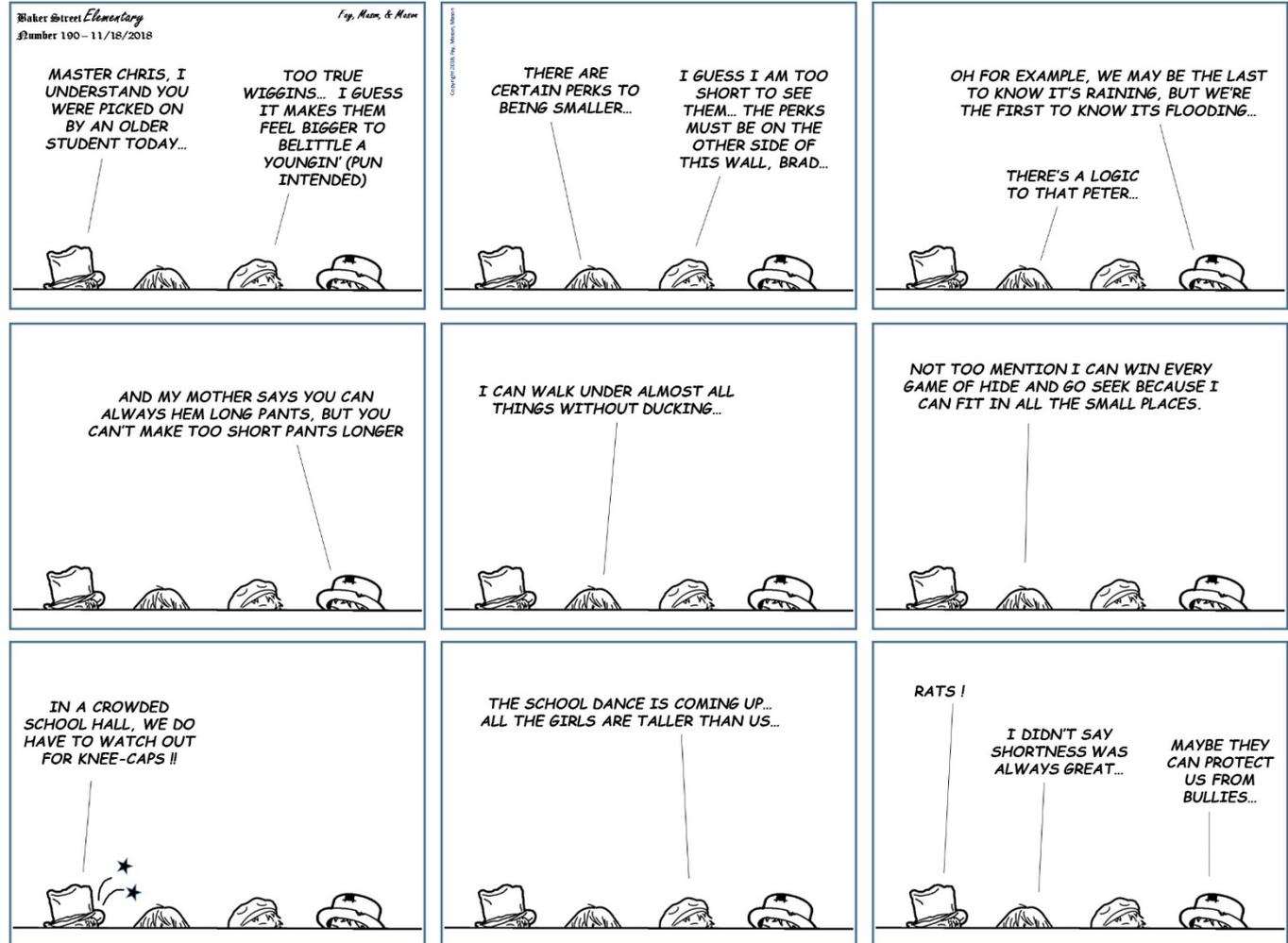
A quick glance at the Sherlock Holmes Canon will turn up any number of mentions of bullies:

- Ronder was remembered as "A huge bully of a man" and "a coward as well as a bully." [VEIL]
- "A more perfect compound of the bully, coward, and sneak than Master Silas Brown I have seldom met with" was how Holmes referred to a suspect. [SILV]
- Moriarty was perhaps even more intimidating than a bully, as his conversational style had "a conviction of sincerity which a mere bully could not produce," according to Holmes. [FINA]

- Jack Woodley was "a dreadful person, a bully to everyone else," according to Violet Smith. [SOLI]

- And we can't forget Watson himself, who in his schoolboy years, participated in the bullying of Percy 'Tadpole' Phelps, the nephew of a great conservative politician. Watson admitted that "it seemed rather a piquant thing to us to chevy him about the playground and hit him over the shins with a wicket." [NAVA]

Because children are pretty much the same all over the world, it should be no surprise that we find some bullies at Baker Street Elementary. But we may also find their protectors there as well.



MY MOTHER HAD AN INTERESTING
OBSERVATION THIS WEEKEND?

WHICH WAS?



I WROTE A THANK
YOU NOTE TO THE
TEACHER FOR
MAKING ME SLIGHTLY
LESS STUPID...

THE TEACHER TOLD ME
THE LAST DAY OF
SCHOOL IS A LITTLE
LATE TO ASK FOR
EXTRA CREDIT WORK...



SUMMER IS THE TIME OF YEAR WHEN
PARENTS REALIZE JUST HOW GROSSLY
UNDERPAID TEACHERS ACTUALLY ARE...



I WONDER IF THE
TEACHERS ALSO
LOOK FORWARD TO
SUMMER
VACATION?

ARE YOU KIDDING ?
NOW I CAN GO TO
THE BATHROOM
WITHOUT
WAITING FOR A
BELL.



Home of the Hounds

